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THE

WORKS

OF

HANNAH MORE,

IN EIGHT VOLUMES:

INCLUDING

Several Pieces never before publiſhed.

VOL. II.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SA
MAHAL.

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SACRED DRAMAS:

CHIEFLY INTENDED

FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

THE SUBJECTS TAKEN FROM THE BIBLE.

All the Books of the Bible are either most admirable and exalted pieces of poetry, or the best materials in the world for it.

COWLEY.

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TO HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT,

THESE SACRED DRAMAS

are, with the moſt perfect reſpect,

INSCRIBED:

as, among the many amiable
and diſtinguiſhed qualities
which adorn her mind,
and add luſtre to her rank,
her excellence in the maternal character
gives a peculiar propriety
to her protection of this little work;
written with an humble wiſh
to promote the love of piety and virtue
in young perſons,

by her GRACE's
moſt obedient,
moſt obliged, and
moſt humble ſervant,

HANNAH MORE.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

ADVERTISEMENT.

I am as ready as the moſt rigid Critic to confeſs, that nothing can be more ſimple and inartificial than the plans of the following Dramas. In the conſtruction of them I have ſeldom ventured to introduce any perſons * of my own creation: ſtill leſs did I imagine myſelf at liberty to invent circumſtances. I reflected, with awe, that *the place whereon I ſtood was holy ground.* All the latitude I permitted myſelf was, to make ſuch perſons as I ſelected act under ſuch circumſtances as I found, and expreſs ſuch ſentiments as, in

* Never, indeed, except in Daniel, and that of neceſſity; as the Bible furniſhes no more than two perſons, Daniel and Darius; and theſe were not ſufficient to carry on the buſineſs of the piece.

in my humble judgment, appeared not unnatural to their characters and situations. —Some of the ſpeeches are ſo long as to retard the action; for I rather aſpired after Moral Inſtruction than the purity of Dramatic Compoſition. I am aware that it may be brought as an objection, that I have now and then made my Jewiſh characters ſpeak too much like Chriſtians, as it may be queſtioned whether I have not occaſionally aſcribed to them a degree of light and knowledge greater than they probably had the means of poſſeſſing: but I was more anxious in conſulting the advantage of my youthful readers by leading them on to higher religious views, than in ſecuring to myſelf the reputation of critical exactneſs.

It will be thought that I have choſen, perhaps, the leaſt important paſſage in the eventful Life of David, for the foundation of the Drama which bears his name. Yet, even in this his firſt exploit, the ſacred Hiſtorian

Hiſtorian repreſents him as exhibiting no mean leſſon of modeſty, humility, courage, and piety. Many will think that the introduction of Saul's daughter would have added to the effect of the piece: and I have no doubt but that it would have made the intrigue more complicated and amuſing had this Drama been intended for the Stage. There, all that is tender, and all that is terrible in the paſſions, find a proper place. But I write for the Young, in whom it will be always time enough to have the paſſions awakened; I write for a claſs of Readers, to whom it is not eaſy to accomodate one's ſubject *, ſo as to be at once uſeful and intereſting.

The

* It would not be eaſy, nor perhaps proper, to introduce Sacred Tragedies on the Engliſh Stage. The pious would think it profane, while the profane would think it dull. Yet the excellent RACINE, in a profligate country and a voluptuous court, ventured to adapt the ſtory of *Athalia* to the French Theatre; and it remains to us a glorious monument of its Author's courageous piety, while it exhibits the perfection of the Dramatic Art.

The amiable Poet * from whom I have taken my motto, after ſhewing the ſuperiority of the Sacred over the Profane Hiſtories, ſome inſtances of which I have noticed in my Introduction, concludes with the following remark, which I may apply to myſelf with far more propriety than it was uſed by the Author:—" I am far " from aſſuming to myſelf to have fulfilled " the duty of this weighty undertaking; " and I ſhall be ambitious of no other fruit " from this weak and imperfect attempt " of mine, but the opening of a way to " the courage and induſtry of ſome other " perſons, who may be better able to per- " form it thoroughly and ſucceſsfully."

* COWLEY.

INTRODUCTION.

O for the facred energy which ftruck
The harp of Jeffe's fon! or for a fpark
Of that celeftial flame which touch'd the lips
Of blefs'd Ifaiah *: when the Seraphim
With living fire defcended, and his foul
From fin's pollution purg'd! or one faint ray,
If human things to heavenly I may join,
Of that pure fpirit which enflam'd the breaft
Of Milton, God's own poet! when, retir'd
In fair enthufiaftic vifion rapt,
The *nightly vifitant* deign'd blefs his couch
With infpiration, fuch as never flow'd
From Acidale or Aganippe's fount!
Then, when the facred fire within him burnt,

He

* Ifaiah, chap. vi.

He ſpake as man or angel might have ſpoke,
When man was pure, and angels were his gueſts.

It will not be. — Nor prophet's burning zeal,
Nor muſe of fire, nor yet to ſweep the ſtrings
With ſacred energy, to me belongs;
Nor with Miltonic hand to touch the chords
That wake to ecſtaſy. From me, alas!
The ſecret ſource of harmony is hid;
The magic powers which catch the raviſh'd ſoul
In melody's ſweet maze, and the clear ſtreams
Which to pure Fancy's yet untaſted ſprings
Enchanted lead. Of theſe I little know!
Yet, all unknowing, dare THY aid invoke,
SPIRIT OF TRUTH! to bleſs theſe worthleſs lays:
Nor impious is the hope; for Thou haſt ſaid,
That none who aſk in faith ſhould aſk in vain.

You I invoke not now, ye fabled Nine!
I not invoke you, tho' you well were ſought
In Greece and Latium, ſought by deathleſs bards,
Whoſe ſyren ſong enchants; and ſhall enchant,

Thro'

Thro' Time's wide-circling round, tho' falſe
their faith,
And leſs than human were the gods they ſung.
Tho' falſe their faith, they taught the beſt they
knew;
And (bluſh, O Chriſtians!) liv'd above their faith.
They would have bleſs'd the beam, and hail'd
the day
Which chac'd the moral darkneſs from their
ſouls.
O! had their minds receiv'd the clearer ray
Of Revelation, they had learn'd to ſcorn
Their rites impure, their leſs than human gods,
Their wild mythology's fantaſtic maze.

Pure PLATO! how had thy chaſte ſpirit hail'd
A faith ſo fitted to thy moral ſenſe!
What hadſt thou felt, to ſee the fair romance
Of high imagination, the bright dream
Of thy pure fancy, more than realiz'd!
Sublime enthuſiaſt! thou hadſt bleſt a ſcheme
Fair, good, and perfect. How had thy rapt ſoul
Caught

Caught fire, and burnt with a diviner flame!
For e'en thy fair idea ne'er conceiv'd
Such plenitude of bliſs, ſuch boundleſs love,
As Deity made viſible to ſenſe.
Unhappy BRUTUS! philoſophic mind!
Great 'midſt the errors of the Stoic ſchool!
How had thy kindling ſpirit joy'd to find
That thy lov'd virtue was no empty name:
Nor hadſt thou met the viſion at Philippi;
Nor hadſt thou ſheath'd thy bloody dagger's point
Or in the breaſt of Ceſar or thy own.

The Pagan page how far more wiſe than ours!
They with the gods they worſhipp'd grac'd their ſong;
Our ſong we grace with gods we diſbelieve;
Retain the manners, but reject the creed.
Shall fiction only raiſe poetic flame,
And ſhall no altars blaze, O TRUTH, to thee?
Shall falſehood only pleaſe, and fable charm?

And

And ſhall eternal Truth neglected lie?
Becauſe immortal, ſlighted, or profan'd?
Truth has our rev'rence only, not our love;
Our praiſe, but not our heart: a deity,
Confeſs'd, but ſhunn'd; acknowledg'd, not ador'd;
Alarm'd we dread her penetrating beams;
She comes too near us, and too brightly ſhines.

Why ſhun to make our duty our delight?
Let *pleaſure* be the motive, diſallow
All high incentives drawn from God's command:
Where ſhall we trace, thro' all the page profane,
A livelier pleaſure and a purer ſource
Of innocent delight, than the fair book
Of holy Truth preſents? for ardent youth,
The ſprightly narrative! for years mature,
The moral document, in ſober robe
Of grave philoſophy array'd: which all
Had heard with admiration, had embrac'd
With rapture, had the ſhades of Academe,
Or the learn'd Porch produc'd it:—Tomes had then

Been

Been multiply'd on Tomes, to draw the veil
Of graceful allegory, to unfold
Some hidden ſource of beauty, now not felt!

Do not the pow'rs of ſoul-enchanting ſong,
Strong imag'ry, bold figure, every charm
Of eaſtern flight ſublime, apt metaphor,
And all the graces in thy lovely train,
Divine Simplicity! aſſemble all
In Sion's ſongs, and bold Iſaiah's ſtrain?

Why ſhou'd the claſſic eye delight to trace
The tale corrupted from its prime pure ſource,
How Pyrrha and the fam'd Theſſalian king
Reſtor'd the ruin'd race of loſt mankind:
Yet turn, incurious, from the patriarch ſav'd,
The reſcued remnant of a delug'd world?
Why are we taught, delighted to recount
Alcides' labours, yet neglect to note
Heroic Samſon 'midſt a life of toil
Herculean? Pain and peril marking both,
A life eventful and diſaſtrous death.

Can

Can all the tales which Grecian ſtory yields;
Can all the names the Roman page records,
Of wondrous friendſhip and ſurpaſſing love;
Can gallant Theſeus and his brave compeer;
Oreſtes, and the partner of his toils;
Achates and his friend; Euryalus
And blooming Niſus, pleaſant in their lives,
And undivided by the ſtroke of death;
Can each, can all, a lovelier picture yield
Of virtuous friendſhip: can they all preſent
A tenderneſs more touching than the love
Of Jonathan and David?—Speak, ye young!
Who, undebauched as yet by faſhion's lore,
And unſophiſticate, unbiaſs'd judge,
Say, is your quick attention more arous'd
By the red plagues which waſted ſmitten Thebes,
Than heav'n's avenging hand on Pharaoh's hoſt?
Or do the vagrant Trojans, driven by fate
On adverſe ſhores ſucceſſive, yield a theme
More grateful to the eager appetite
Of young impatience, than the wand'ring tribes
The Hebrew leader thro' the deſart led?

The

The beauteous Maid *, (tho' tender is the tale,)
Whofe guiltlefs blood on Aulis' altar ftream'd,
Smites not the bofom with a fofter pang
Than her in fate how fadly fimilar,
The Gileaditifh virgin — victims both
Of vows unfanctify'd.——

Such are the lovely themes which court the Bard,
Scarce yet effay'd in verfe — for verfe how meet!
While heav'n-defcended fong, forgetting oft
Her facred dignity and high defcent,
Debafes her fair origin; oft fpreads
Corruption's deadly bane, pollutes the heart
Of innocence, and with unhallow'd hand
Prefents the poifon'd chalice, to the brim
Fill'd with delicious ruin, miniftring
Th' unwholefome rapture to the fever'd tafte,
While its fell venom, with malignant pow'r,
Strikes at the root of virtue, with'ring all
Her vital energy. Oh! for fome balm

Of

* Iphigenia.

Of sov'reign power, to raise the drooping Muse
To all the health of virtue! to infuse
A gen'rous warmth, to rouse an holy zeal
And give her high conceptions of herself,
Her dignity, her worth, her aim, her end!

For me, Eternal Spirit, let thy word
My path illume! O thou compassionate God!
Thou know'st our frame, thou know'st we are but dust;
From dust a Seraph's zeal thou wilt not seek,
Nor wilt thou ask an Angel's purity.
But hear, and hearing pardon; as I strive,
Tho' with a feeble voice and flagging wing,
A glowing heart, but pow'rless hand, to paint
The faith of favor'd man to heav'n; to sing
The ways inscrutable of heav'n to man;
May I, by thy celestial guidance led,
Fix deep in my own heart the truths I teach!
In my own life transcribe whate'er of good
To others I propose! and by thy rule

Correct th' irregular *, reform the wrong,
Exalt the low, and brighten the obſcure!
Still may I note, how all th' agreeing parts
Of this conſummate ſyſtem join to frame
One fair, one finiſh'd, one harmonious whole!
Trace the cloſe links which form the perfect chain
In beautiful connexion; mark the ſcale
Whoſe nice gradations, with progreſſion true,
For ever riſing, end in DEITY!

* What in me is dark
Illumine! what is low, raiſe and ſupport!
PARADISE LOST.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

Let me aſſert eternal Providence,
And juſtify the ways of God to man.

PARADISE LOST.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

HEBREW WOMEN.

JOCHEBED, Mother of Mofes.
MIRIAM, his Sifter.

EGYPTIANS.

The PRINCESS, King Pharaoh's Daughter.
MELITA; and other Attendants.

Scene—On the Banks of the Nile.

The Subject is taken from the Second Chapter of the Book of Exodus.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART I.

JOCHEBED, MIRIAM.

JOCHEBED.

WHY was my pray'r accepted? why did Heav'n
In anger hear me, when I aſk'd a ſon?
Ye dames of Egypt! ye triumphant mothers!
You no imperial tyrant marks for ruin;
You are not doom'd to ſee the babes you bore,
The babes you fondly nurture, bleed before you!
You taſte the tranſports of a mother's love,
Without a mother's anguiſh! wretched Iſrael!
Can I forbear to mourn the different lot
Of thy ſad daughters!—Why did God's own hand
Reſcue his choſen race by Joſeph's care?

 Joſeph!

Joſeph! th' elected inſtrument of Heav'n,
Decreed to ſave illuſtrious Abraham's ſons,
What time the famine rag'd in Canaan's land.
Iſrael, who then was ſpar'd, muſt periſh now!

Thou great myſterious Pow'r, who haſt involv'd
Thy wiſe decrees in darkneſs, to perplex
The pride of human wiſdom, to confound
The daring ſcrutiny, and prove the faith
Of thy preſuming creatures! hear me now:
O vindicate thy honour; clear this doubt,
Teach me to trace this maze of Providence:
Why ſave the fathers, if the ſons muſt periſh?

MIRIAM.

Ah me, my mother! whence theſe floods of grief!

JOCHEBED.

My ſon! my ſon! I cannot ſpeak the reſt.
Ye who have ſons can only know my fondneſs!

Ye who have loſt them, or who fear to loſe,
Can only know my pangs! none elſe can gueſs
them.
A mother's ſorrows cannot be conceiv'd
But by a mother—Wou'd I were not one!

MIRIAM.

With earneſt pray'rs thou didſt requeſt this ſon,
And Heaven has granted him.

JOCHEBED.

O ſad eſtate
Of human wretchedneſs; ſo weak is man,
So ignorant and blind, that did not God
Sometimes withhold in mercy what we aſk,
We ſhou'd be ruin'd at our own requeſt.

Too well thou know'ſt, my child, the ſtern
decree
Of Egypt's cruel king, hard-hearted Pharaoh;
"That every male, of Hebrew mother born,
"Muſt die." Oh! do I live to tell it thee?

Muſt die a bloody death! My child, my ſon,
My youngeſt born, my darling muſt be ſlain!

MIRIAM.

The helpleſs innocent! and muſt he die?

JOCHEBED.

No: if a mother's tears, a mother's prayers,
A mother's fond precautions can prevail,
He ſhall not die. I have a thought, my Miriam,
And ſure the God of mercies who inſpir'd,
Will bleſs the ſecret purpoſe of my ſoul,
To ſave his precious life.

MIRIAM.

Hop'ſt thou that Pharaoh —

JOCHEBED.

I have no hope in Pharaoh, much in God;
Much in the ROCK of AGES.

MIRIAM.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL LIBRARY

MIRIAM.

Think, O think,
What perils thou already haſt incurr'd,
And ſhun the greater which may yet remain.
Three months, three dangerous months thou haſt preſerv'd
Thy infant's life, and in thy houſe conceal'd him!
Should Pharaoh know!

JOCHEBED.

Oh! let the tyrant know,
And feel what he inflicts! Yes, hear me, Heav'n!
Send thy right aiming thunderbolts—But huſh,
My impious murmurs! Is it not thy will;
Thou, infinite in mercy? Thou permitt'ſt
This ſeeming evil for ſome latent good.
Yes, I will laud thy grace, and bleſs thy goodneſs
For what I have, and not arraign thy wiſdom
For what I fear to loſe. O, I will bleſs thee
That Aaron will be ſpar'd! that my firſt born

Lives

Lives ſafe and undiſturbed! that he was giv'n me
Before this impious perſecution rag'd!

MIRIAM.

And yet who knows, but the fell tyrant's rage
May reach *his* precious life:

JOCHEBED.

I fear for him,
For thee, for all. A doating parent lives
In many lives; thro' many a nerve ſhe feels;
From child to child the quick affections ſpread,
For ever wand'ring, yet for ever fix'd.
Nor does diviſion weaken, nor the force
Of conſtant operation e'er exhauſt
Parental love. All other paſſions change
With changing circumſtances; riſe or fall,
Dependant on their object; claim returns;
Live on reciprocation, and expire
Unfed by hope. A mother's fondneſs reigns
Without a rival, and without an end.

MIRIAM.

But ſay what Heav'n inſpires to ſave thy ſon?

JOCHEBED.

Since the dear fatal morn which gave him birth,
I have revolv'd in my diſtracted mind
Each means to ſave his life: and many a thought
Which fondneſs prompted, prudence has oppos'd
As perilous and raſh. With theſe poor hands
I 've fram'd a little ark of ſlender reeds;
With pitch and ſlime I have ſecur'd the ſides.
In this frail cradle I intend to lay
My little helpleſs infant, and expoſe him
Upon the banks of Nile.

MIRIAM.

'Tis full of danger.

JOCHEBED.

'Tis danger to expoſe, and death to keep him.

MIRIAM.

Yet, Oh! reflect. Shou'd the fierce crocodile,
The native and the tyrant of the Nile,
Seize the defenceless infant!

JOCHEBED.

Oh, forbear!
Spare my fond heart. Yet not the crocodile,
Nor all the deadly monsters of the deep,
To me are half so terrible as Pharaoh,
That heathen king, that royal murderer!

MIRIAM.

Shou'd he escape, which yet I dare not hope,
Each sea-born monster, yet the winds and waves
He cannot 'scape.

JOCHEBED.

Know, God is ev'rywhere;
Not to one narrow, partial spot confin'd;
No, not to chosen Israel: he extends

Thro'

Thro' all the vaſt infinitude of ſpace:
At his command the furious tempeſts riſe —
The blaſting of the breath of his diſpleaſure.
He tells the world of waters when to roar;
And, at his bidding, winds and ſeas are calm:
In him, not in an arm of fleſh, I truſt;
In him, whoſe promiſe never yet has fail'd,
I place my confidence.

MIRIAM.

What muſt I do?
Command thy daughter; for thy words have wak'd
An holy boldneſs in my youthful breaſt.

JOCHEBED.

Go then, my MIRIAM, go, and take the infant.
Buried in harmleſs ſlumbers there he lies:
Let me not ſee him — ſpare my heart that pang.
Yet ſure, one little look may be indulg'd,
And I may feaſt my fondneſs with his ſmiles,
And ſnatch one laſt, laſt kiſs.—No more, my heart;
That

That rapture wou'd be fatal—I ſhou'd keep him.
I cou'd not doom to death the babe I claſp d:
Did ever mother kill her ſleeping boy?
I dare not hazard it—The taſk be thine.
Oh! do not wake my child; remove him ſoftly;
And gently lay him on the river's brink.

MIRIAM.

Did thoſe magicians, whom the ſons of Egypt
Conſult and think all-potent, join their ſkill;
And was it great as Egypt's ſons believe;
Yet all their ſecret wizard arts combin'd,
To ſave this little ark of bulruſhes,
Thus fearfully expos'd, cou'd not effect it.
Their ſpells, their incantations, and dire charms
Cou'd not preſerve it.

JOCHEBED.

Know this ark is charm'd
With incantations Pharoah ne'er employ'd;
With ſpells, which impious Egypt never knew:
With invocations to the living God,

I twiſted

I twisted every slender reed together,
And with a pray'r did every ozier weave.

MIRIAM.

I go.

JOCHEBED.

Yet e'er thou go'st, observe me well:
When thou hast laid him in his wat'ry bed,
O leave him not; but at a distance wait,
And mark what Heaven's high will determines
for him.
Lay him among the flags on yonder beach,
Just where the royal gardens meet the Nile.
I dare not follow him, Suspicion's eye
Wou'd note my wild demeanour! MIRIAM, yes,
The mother's fondness wou'd betray the child.
Farewell! God of my fathers, oh protect him!

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART II.

Enter MIRIAM, *after having depoſited the child.*

MIRIAM.

Yes, I have laid him in his wat'ry bed,
His wat'ry grave, I fear!—I tremble ſtill;
It was a cruel taſk—ſtill I muſt weep!
But ah, my mother! who ſhall ſooth thy griefs?
The flags and ſea-weeds will awhile ſuſtain
Their precious load; but it muſt ſink ere long!
Sweet babe, farewell! Yet think not I will leave
thee;
No, I will watch thee till the greedy waves
Devour thy little bark: I'll ſit me down,
And ſing to thee, ſweet babe; thou can'ſt not
hear;
But 'twill amuſe me, while I watch thy fate.

[*She ſits down on a bank, and ſings.*

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

SONG.

I.

Thou, who canſt make the feeble ſtrong,
O God of Iſrael, hear my ſong!
Not mine ſuch notes as Egypt's daughters raiſe;
'Tis thee, O God of Hoſts, I ſtrive to praiſe.

II.

Ye winds, the ſervants of the Lord,
Ye waves, obedient to his word,
O ſpare the babe committed to your truſt;
And Iſrael ſhall confeſs the Lord is juſt!

III.

Tho' doom'd to find an early grave,
This infant, Lord, thy pow'r can ſave,
And he, whoſe death's decreed by Pharaoh's hand,
May riſe a prophet to redeem the land.

[*She riſes and looks out.*

What female form bends hitherward her ſteps?
Of royal port ſhe ſeems; perhaps ſome friend,
Rais'd by the guardian care of bounteous Heaven,
To prop the falling houſe of Levi. — Soft!
I'll liſten unperceiv'd; theſe trees will hide me.
[*She ſtands behind.*

Enter the PRINCESS of EGYPT, *attended by a train of Ladies.*

PRINCESS.

No farther, Virgins; here I mean to reſt,
To taſte the pleaſant coolneſs of the breeze;
Perhaps to bathe in this tranſlucent ſtream.
Did not our holy law * enjoin th' ablution
Frequent and regular, it ſtill were needful
To mitigate the fervours of our clime.
MELITA, ſtay — the reſt at diſtance wait.
[*They all go out, except one.*

The

* The ancient Egyptians uſed to waſh their bodies four times every twenty-four hours.

The PRINCESS *looks out.*

Sure, or I much miſtake, or I perceive
Upon the ſedgy margin of the Nile
A cheſt; entangled in the reeds it ſeems:
Diſcern'ſt thou aught?

MELITA.

Something, but what I know not.

PRINCESS.

Go and examine what this ſight may mean.
[*Exit Maid.*

MIRIAM *behind.*

O bleſt, beyond my hopes! he is diſcover'd;
My brother will be ſav'd! who is this ſtranger?
Ah! 'tis the Princeſs, cruel Pharaoh's daughter.
If ſhe reſemble her inhuman Sire,
She muſt be cruel too; yet fame reports her
Moſt merciful and mild. — Great Lord of all,
By whoſe good ſpirit bounteous thoughts are given

And deeds of love perform'd — be gracious now,
And touch her foul with mercy!

Re-enter MELITA.

PRINCESS.

Well, Melita!
Haft thou difcover'd what the veffel is!

MELITA.

Oh, Princefs, I have feen the ftrangeft fight!
Within the veffel lies a fleeping babe,
A fairer infant have I never feen!

PRINCESS.

Who knows but fome unhappy Hebrew woman
Has thus expos'd her infant, to evade
The ftern decree of my too cruel Sire.
Unhappy mothers! oft my heart has bled
In fecret anguifh o'er your flaughter'd fons;
Powerlefs to fave, yet hating to deftroy.

MELITA.

MELITA.

Shou'd this be ſo, my Princeſs knows the danger.

PRINCESS.

No danger ſhou'd deter from acts of mercy.

MIRIAM *behind.*

A thouſand bleſſings on her princely head!

PRINCESS.

Too much the ſons of Jacob have endur'd
From royal Pharaoh's unrelenting hate;
Too much our houſe has cruſh'd their alien race.
Is 't not enough that cruel taſk-maſters
Grind them by hard oppreſſion? not enough
That iron bondage bows their ſpirits down?
Is 't not enough my Sire his greatneſs owes,
His palaces, his fanes magnificent,
Thoſe ſtructures which the world with wonder views,
To much inſulted Iſrael's patient race?

To them his growing cities owe their ſplendour:
Their toils fair Rameſes and Pythom built;
And ſhall we fill the meaſure of our crimes,
And crown our guilt with murder? and ſhall I
Sanction the ſin I hate? forbid it, Mercy!

MELITA.

I know thy royal father fears the ſtrength
Of this ſtill growing race, who flouriſh more
The more they are oppreſs'd: he dreads their
numbers.

PRINCESS.

Apis forbid! Pharaoh afraid of Iſrael!
Yet ſhou'd this outcaſt race, this hapleſs people
Ere grow to ſuch a formidable greatneſs,
(Which all the gods avert whom Egypt worſhips,)
This infant's life can never ſerve their cauſe,
Nor can his ſingle death prevent their greatneſs.

MELITA.

MELITA.

Truſt not to that vain hope. By weakeſt means
And moſt unlikely inſtruments, full oft
Are great events produc'd. This reſcued child
Perhaps may live to ſerve his upſtart race
More than an hoſt.

PRINCESS.

How ill does it beſeem
Thy tender years and gentle womanhood,
To ſteel thy breaſt to pity's ſacred touch!
So weak, ſo unprotected is our ſex,
So conſtantly expos'd, ſo very helpleſs,
That did not Heav'n itſelf enjoin compaſſion,
Yet human policy ſhou'd make us kind,
Leſt in the rapid turn of Fortune's wheel,
We live to need the pity we refuſe.
Yes, I will ſave him—Mercy, thou haſt conquered!
Lead on — and from the ruſhes we'll remove
The feeble ark which cradles this poor babe.

[*The* PRINCESS *and her Maid go out.*

MIRIAM *comes forward.*

How poor were words to ſpeak my boundleſs
joy!
The Princeſs will protect him; bleſs her, Heav'n!
[*She looks out after the Princeſs, and deſcribes her action.*
With what impatient ſteps ſhe ſeeks the ſhore!
Now ſhe approaches where the ark is laid!
With what compaſſion, with what angel-ſweetneſs,
She bends to look upon the infant's face!
She takes his little hand in hers — he wakes —
She ſmiles upon him — hark, alas! he cries;
Weep on, ſweet babe! weep on, till thou haſt
touch'd
Each chord of pity, waken'd every ſenſe
Of melting ſympathy, and ſtol'n her ſoul!
She takes him in her arms — O lovely Princeſs!
How goodneſs heightens beauty! now ſhe claſps
him
With fondneſs to her heart, ſhe gives him now
With tender caution to her damſel's arms:

She points her to the palace, and again
This way the Princefs bends her gracious fteps;
The virgin train retire and bear the child.

Re-enter the PRINCESS.

PRINCESS.

Did ever innocence and infant beauty
Plead with fuch dumb but powerful eloquence?
If I, a ftranger, feel thefe foft emotions,
What muft the mother who expos'd him feel!
Go, fetch a woman of the Hebrew race,
That fhe may nurfe the babe:—and, by her garb,
Lo, fuch a one is here!

MIRIAM.

Princefs, all hail!
Forgive the bold intrufion of thy fervant,
Who ftands a charm'd fpectator of thy goodnefs.

PRINCESS.

I have redeem'd an infant from the waves,
Whom I intend to nurture as mine own.

MIRIAM.

My tranſports will betray me! [*aſide*] Gen'rous
Princeſs!

PRINCESS.

Know'ſt thou a matron of the Hebrew race
To whom I may confide him?

MIRIAM.

Well I know
A prudent matron of the houſe of Levi;
Her name Jochebed is, the wife of Amram;
Of gentle manners, fam'd throughout her tribe
For ſoft humanity; full well I know
That ſhe will rear him with a mother's love.
[*Aſide*] Oh truly ſpoke! a mother's love indeed!
To her deſpairing arms I mean to give

This

This precious truſt; the nurſe ſhall be the
mother!

PRINCESS.

With ſpeed conduct this matron to the palace.
Yes, I will raiſe him up to princely greatneſs,
And he ſhall be my ſon; I 'll have him train'd
By choiceſt ſages, in the deepeſt lore
Of Egypt's ſapient ſons; — his name be *Moſes*,
For I have drawn him from the perilous flood.

[*They go out. She kneels.*

Thou Great Unſeen! who cauſeſt gentle deeds,
And ſmil'ſt on what thou cauſeſt; thus I bleſs
thee,
That thou did'ſt deign conſult the tender make
Of yielding human hearts, when thou ordain'dſt
Humanity a virtue! didſt not make it
A rigorous exerciſe to counteract
Some ſtrong deſire within; to war and fight
Againſt the pow'rs of Nature; but did'ſt bend
The nat'ral bias of the ſoul to mercy:

Then

Then mad'ſt that mercy duty! Gracious Pow'r!
Mad'ſt the keen rapture exquiſite as right;
Beyond the joys of ſenſe; as pleaſure ſweet,
As reaſon vigorous, and as inſtinct ſtrong!

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART III.

Enter JOCHEBED.

I 'VE almoſt reach'd the place —with cautious ſteps
I muſt approach the ſpot where he is laid,
Leſt from the royal gardens any 'ſpy me.
— Poor babe! ere this the preſſing calls of hunger
Have broke thy ſhort repoſe; the chilling waves,
Ere this, have drench'd thy little ſhiv'ring limbs.
What muſt my babe have ſuffer'd! — No one ſees me!
But ſoft, does no one liſten? — Ah! how hard,
How very hard for fondneſs to be prudent!
Now is the moment to embrace and feed him.

[*She looks out.*

Where's

Where 's Miriam ? ſhe has left her little charge,
Perhaps through fear; perhaps ſhe was detected.
How wild is thought! how terrible conjecture!
A mother's fondneſs frames a thouſand fears,
With thrilling nerve feels every real ill,
And ſhapes imagin'd miſeries into being.

[*She looks towards the river.*

Ah me! where is he? ſoul-diſtracting ſight!
He is not there — he's loſt, he's gone, he's drown'd!
Toſs'd by each beating ſurge my infant floats.
Cold, cold, and wat'ry is thy grave, my child!
O no — I ſee the ark — Tranſporting ſight!

[*She goes towards it.*

I have it here. — Alas, the ark is empty!
The caſket's left, the precious gem is gone!
You ſpar'd him, pitying ſpirits of the deep!
But vain your mercy; ſome inſatiate beaſt,
Cruel as Pharaoh, took the life you ſpar'd —
And I ſhall never, never ſee my boy!

Enter MIRIAM.

JOCHEBED.

Come and lament with me thy brother's loſs!

MIRIAM.

Come and adore with me the God of Jacob!

JOCHEBED.

Miriam — the child is dead!

MIRIAM.

He lives! he lives!

JOCHEBED.

Impoſſible — Oh, do not mock my grief!
See'ſt thou that empty veſſel?

MIRIAM.

From that veſſel
Th' Egyptian Princeſs took him.

JOCHEBED.

JOCHEBED.

Pharaoh's daughter?
Then ſtill he will be ſlain: a bloodier death
Will terminate his woes.

MIRIAM.

His life is ſafe;
For know, ſhe means to rear him as her own.

JOCHEBED.

[*Falls on her knees in rapture.*

To God, the Lord, the glory be aſcrib'd!
O magnify'd for ever be THY might
Who mock'ſt all human forethought! who o'er-rul'ſt
The hearts of ſinners to perform thy work,
Defeating their own purpoſe! who canſt plant
Unlook'd-for mercy in a heathen's heart,
And from the depth of evil bring forth good!

[*She riſes.*

MIRIAM.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SA

MIRIAM.

O bleſt event, beyond our warmeſt hopes!

JOCHEBED.

What! ſhall my ſon be nurtur'd in a court,
In princely grandeur bred? taught every art
And ev'ry wond'rous ſcience Egypt knows?
Yet ah! I tremble, Miriam; ſhou'd he learn,
With Egypt's poliſh'd arts her baneful faith!
O worſe exchange for death! yes, ſhou'd he learn
In yon proud palace to diſown HIS hand
Who thus has ſav'd him: ſhou'd he e'er embrace
(As ſure he will, if bred in Pharaoh's court)
The groſs idolatries which Egypt owns,
Her graven images, her brutiſh gods,
Then ſhall I wiſh he had not been preſerv'd
To ſhame his fathers and deny his faith.

MIRIAM.

Then to diſpel thy fears and crown thy joy,

Hear farther wonders — Know, the gen'rous
Princefs .
To thine own care thy darling child commits.

JOCHEBED.

Speak, while my joy will give me leave to
liften!

MIRIAM.

By her commiffion'd, thou behold'ft me here,
To feek a matron of the Hebrew race
To nurfe him: thou, my mother, art that matron.
I faid I knew thee well; that thou wou'dft rear
him
E'en with a mother's fondnefs; fhe who bare him
(I told the Princefs) would not love him more.

JOCHEBED.

Fountain of Mercy! whofe pervading eye
Can look within and read what paffes there,
Accept my thoughts for thanks! I have no words.

My

My ſoul o'erfraught with gratitude, rejects
The aid of language — Lord! behold my heart.

MIRIAM.

Yes, thou ſhalt pour into his infant mind
The pureſt precepts of the pureſt faith.

JOCHEBED.

O! I will fill his tender ſoul with virtue,
And warm his boſom with devotion's flame!
Aid me, celeſtial Spirit! with thy grace,
And be my labours with thy influence crown'd!
Without it they were vain. Then, then, my Miriam,
When he is furniſh'd, 'gainſt the evil day,
With God's whole armour*, girt with ſacred truth,
And as a breaſtplate wearing righteouſneſs,
Arm'd with the Spirit of God, the ſhield of faith,
And

* 2 Theſſ. chap. v. Epheſ. chap. vi.

And with the helmet of ſalvation crown'd,
Inur'd to watching and diſpos'd to pray'r;
Then may I ſend him to a dangerous court,
And ſafely truſt him in a perilous world,
Too full of tempting ſnares and fond deluſions!

MIRIAM.

May bounteous Heav'n thy pious cares reward!

JOCHEBED.

O Amram! O my huſband! when thou com'ſt,
Wearied at night, to reſt thee from the toils
Impos'd by haughty Pharaoh, what a tale
Have I to tell thee! Yes: thy darling ſon
Was loſt, and is reſtor'd; was dead, and lives!

MIRIAM.

How joyful ſhall we ſpend the live-long night
In praiſes to Jehovah; who thus mocks
All human foreſight, and converts the means
Of ſeeming ruin into great deliverance!

JOCHEBED.

JOCHEBED.

Had not my child been doom'd to ſuch ſtrange
perils
As a fond mother trembles to recall,
He had not been preſerv'd.

MIRIAM.

And mark ſtill farther;
Had he been ſav'd by any other hand,
He had been ſtill expos'd to equal ruin.

JOCHEBED.

Then let us join to bleſs the hand of Heav'n,
That this poor outcaſt of the houſe of Iſrael,
Condemn'd to die by Pharaoh, kept in ſecret
By my advent'rous fondneſs; then expos'd
E'en by that very fondneſs which conceal'd him,
Is now, to fill the wond'rous round of mercy,
Preſerv'd from periſhing by Pharaoh's daughter,
Sav'd by the very hand which ſought to cruſh
him!

Wise and unsearchable are all thy ways,
Thou God of Mercies! — Lead me to my child!

DAVID AND GOLIATH:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

O bienheureux mille fois,
L'Enfant que le Seigneur aime,
Qui de bonne heure entend ſa voix,
Et que ce Dieu daigne inſtruire lui-même!
Loin du monde élevé; de tous les dons des Cieux,
Il eſt orné dès ſa naiſſance;
Et du méchant l'abord contagieux
N'altere point ſon innocence.

ATHALIE.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

SAUL, King of Iſrael.
ABNER, his General.
JESSE.
ELIAB, ABINADAB, DAVID, } Sons of Jeſſe.
GOLIATH, The Philiſtine Giant.

Philiſtines, Iſraelites, &c. &c.

Chorus of Hebrew Women.

The Scene lies in the Camp in the Valley of Elah, and the adjacent plain.

The Subject is taken from the Seventeenth Chapter of the Firſt Book of Samuel.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART I.

SCENE—A Shepherd's Tent on a Plain.

DAVID, *under a ſpreading tree, plays on his harp, and ſings.*

I.

GREAT Lord of all things! Pow'r divine!
Breathe on this erring heart of mine
Thy grace ſerene and pure;
Defend my frail, my erring youth,
And teach me this important truth,
The humble are ſecure!

II.

Teach me to bleſs my lowly lot
Confin'd to this paternal cot,

Remote

Remote from regal ſtate!
Content to court the cooling glade
Inhale the breeze, enjoy the ſhade,
And love my humble fate.

III.

No anxious vigils here I keep,
No dreams of gold diſtract my ſleep,
Nor lead my heart aſtray;
Nor blaſting Envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleaſures of the vale,
To vex my harmleſs day.

IV.

Yon tow'r, which rears its head ſo high,
And bids defiance to the ſky,
Invites the hoſtile winds:
Yon branching oak extending wide,
Provokes deſtruction by its pride,
And courts the fall it finds.

V.

Then let me ſhun th' ambitious deed,
And all the dang'rous paths which lead
To honours falſely won:
Lord! in thy ſure protection bleſt,
Submiſſive will I ever reſt,
And may thy will be done!

[*He lays down his harp and riſes.*

DAVID.

Methinks this ſhepherd's life were dull and taſteleſs
Without the charm of ſoothing ſong or harp:
With it, not undelightful is the haunt
Of wood, or lonely grove, or ruſſet plain,
Made vocal by the muſe. With this lov'd harp,
This daily ſolace of my cares, I ſooth'd
The melancholy monarch, when he lay
Smit by the chill and ſpirit-quenching hand
Of black deſpair. God of my fathers, hear me!
Here I devote my harp, my verſe, myſelf,
To thy bleſt ſervice! gladly to proclaim

Glory

Glory to God on high, on earth good-will
To man; to pour my grateful ſoul before thee;
To ſing thy pow'r, thy wiſdom, and thy love,
And ev'ry gracious attribute: to paint
The charms of heav'n-born virtue! So ſhall I
(Tho' with long interval of worth) aſpire
To imitate the work of ſaints above,
Of Cherub and of Seraphim. My heart,
My talents, all I am, and all I have,
Is thine, O Father! Gracious Lord, accept
The humble dedication! Offer'd gifts
Of ſlaughter'd bulls and goats ſacrifical
Thou haſt refus'd: but lo, I come, O Lord!
To do thy will; the living ſacrifice
Of an obedient heart I lay before thee:
This humble off'ring more ſhall pleaſe thee,
Lord,
Than horned bullocks, ceremonial rites,
New moons, and ſabbaths, paſſovers, and faſts!
Yet thoſe I too will keep; but not in lieu
Of holineſs ſubſtantial, inward worth;
As commutation cheap for pious deeds

And

And purity of life, but as the types
Of better things; as fair external ſigns
Of inward holineſs and ſecret truth.

But ſee, my father, good old Jeſſe comes!
To cheer the ſetting evening of whoſe life,
Content, a ſimple ſhepherd here I dwell,
Tho' Iſrael is in arms; and royal Saul,
Encamp'd in yonder field, defies Philiſtia.

JESSE, DAVID.

JESSE.

Bleſt be the gracious Pow'r who gave my age
To boaſt a ſon like thee! Thou art the ſtaff
Which props my bending years, and makes me bear
The heavy burden of declining age
With fond complacence. How unlike thy fate,
O venerable Eli! But two ſons,
But only two to gild the dim remains
Of life's departing day, and bleſs thy age,
And both were curſes to thee! Witneſs, Heaven,

In

In all the cruel catalogue of pains
Humanity turns o'er, if there be one
So terrible to human tenderneſs
As an unnatural child!

DAVID.

O! my lov'd father!
Long may'ſt thou live, in years and honours rich;
To taſte and to communicate the joys,
The thouſand fond endearing charities
Of tenderneſs domeſtic; Nature's beſt
And lovelieſt gift, with which ſhe well atones
The niggard boon of fortune.

JESSE.

O! my ſon!
Of all the graces which adorn thy youth,
I, with a father's fondneſs, muſt commend
Thy try'd humility. For tho' the Seer
Pour'd on thy choſen head the ſacred oil
In ſign of future greatneſs, in ſure pledge

Of higheſt dignity, yet here thou dwell'ſt
Content with toil and careleſs of repoſe;
And (harder ſtill for an ingenuous mind)
Content to be obſcure; content to watch,
With careful eye, thine humble father's flock!
O earthly emblem of Celeſtial things!
So Iſrael's ſhepherd watches o'er his fold:
The weak ones in his foſt'ring boſom bears:
And gently leads, in his ſuſtaining hand,
The feeble ones with young.

DAVID.

Know'ſt thou, my father,
Aught from the field? for tho' ſo near the camp,
Tho' war's proud enſigns ſtream on yonder plain,
And all Philiſtia's ſwarming hoſts encamp,
Oppos'd to royal Saul, beneath whoſe banners
My brothers lift the ſpear, — I have not left
My fleecy charge, by thee committed to me,
To learn the various fortune of the war.

JESSE.

And wifely haft thou done. Thrice happy realm,
Who fhall fubmit one day to his command
Who can fo well obey! Obedience leads
To certain honours. Not the tow'ring wing
Of eagle plum'd ambition mounts fo furely
To fortune's higheft fummit as obedience.

[*A diftant found of trumpets.*

But why that fudden ardour, O my fon?
That trumpet's found (tho' fo remote its voice,
We hardly catch the echo as it dies)
Has rous'd the mantling crimfon in thy cheek,
Kindled the martial fpirit in thine eye;
And my young fhepherd feels an hero's fire!

DAVID.

Thou haft not told the pofture of the war;
And much my beating bofom pants to hear.

JESSE.

Uncertain is the fortune of the field.
I tremble for thy brothers, thus expos'd
To conftant peril; nor for them alone
Does the quick feeling agonize my heart.
I feel for all! — I mourn, that ling'ring war
Still hangs his banner o'er my native land,
Belov'd Jerufalem! O war! what art thou?
At once the proof and fcourge of man's fall'n
ftate!
After the brighteft conqueft, what appears
Of all thy glories? for the vanquifh'd, chains!
For the proud victor, what? Alas! to reign
O'er defolated nations! a drear wafte,
By one man's crime, by one man's luft of pow'r,
Unpeopled! Ravag'd fields affume the place
Of fmiling harvefts, and uncultur'd plains
Succeed the fertile vineyard; barren wafte
Deforms the fpot once rich with lufcious fig
And the fat olive. — Devaftation reigns.
Here, rifled temples are the cavern'd dens

Of ſavage beaſts, or haunt of birds obſcene:
There, pop'lous cities blacken in the ſun,
And, in the gen'ral wreck, proud palaces
Lie undiſtinguiſh'd, ſave by the dun ſmoke
Of recent conflagration. When the ſong
Of dear-bought joy, with many a triumph ſwell'd,
Salutes the victor's ear, and ſoothes his pride,
How is the grateful harmony profan'd
With the ſad diſſonance of virgins' cries,
Who mourn their brothers ſlain! of matrons hoar,
Who claſp their wither'd hands, and fondly aſk,
With iteration ſhrill, their ſlaughter'd ſons!
How is the laurel's verdure ſtain'd with blood,
And ſoil'd with widows' tears!

DAVID.

Thrice mournful truth!
Yet when our country's ſacred rights are menac'd;
Her firm foundations ſhaken to their baſe;
When all we love, and all that we revere,

Our

Our hearths and altars, children, parents, wives,
Our liberties and laws, the Throne they guard,
Are ſcorn'd and trampl'd on — then, then, my father!
'Tis then Religion's voice; then God himſelf
Commands us to defend his injur'd name,
And think the vict'ry cheaply bought with life.
'Twere then inglorious weakneſs, mean ſelf-love,
To lie inactive, when the ſtirring voice
Of the ſhrill trumpet wakes the patriot youth,
And, with heroic valour, bids them dare
The foul idolatrous bands, e'en to the death.

JESSE.

God and thy country claim the life they gave;
No other cauſe can ſanctify reſentment.

DAVID.

Sure virtuous friendſhip is a noble cauſe!
O were the princely Jonathan in danger,
How wou'd I die, well pleas'd, in his defence!
When, 'twas long ſince, then but a ſtripling boy

I made ſhort ſojourn in his father's palace,
(At firſt to ſoothe his troubled mind with ſong,
His armour-bearer next,) I well remember
The gracious bounties of the gallant prince.
How wou'd he ſit, attentive to my ſtrain,
While to my harp I ſung the harmleſs joys
Which crown a ſhepherd's life! How wou'd he cry,
Bleſs'd youth! far happier in thy native worth,
Far richer in the talent Heav'n has lent thee,
Than if a crown hung o'er thy anxious brow.
The jealous monarch mark'd our growing friendſhip;
And as my favour grew with thoſe about him,
His royal bounty leſſen'd, till at length,
For Bethl'hem's ſafer ſhades I left the court.
Nor wou'd theſe alter'd features now be known,
Grown into manly ſtrength; nor this chang'd form,
Enlarg'd with age, and clad in ruſſet weed.

JESSE.

I have employment for thee, my lov'd fon!
Will pleafe thy active fpirit. Go, my boy!
Hafte to the field of war, to yonder camp,
Where in the vale of Elah mighty Saul
Commands the hofts of Ifrael. Greet thy brothers:
Obferve their deeds, note their demeanor well,
And mark if on their actions Wifdom waits.
Bear to them too (for well the wafte of war
Will make it needful) fuch plain healthful viands
As furnifh out our frugal fhepherd's meal.
And to the valiant captain of their hoft
Prefent fuch rural gifts as fuit our fortune:
Heap'd on the board within my tent thou'lt find
them.

DAVID.

With joy I'll bear thy prefents to my brothers;
And to the valiant captain of their hoft
The rural gifts thy gratitude affigns him.
Delightful tafk! — for I fhall view the camp!

What tranſport to behold the tented field,
The pointed ſpear, the blaze of ſhields and arms,
And all the proud accoutrements of war!
But, oh! far dearer tranſport wou'd it yield me,
Cou'd this right arm alone avenge the cauſe
Of injur'd Iſrael! cou'd my ſingle death
Preſerve the guiltleſs thouſands doom'd to bleed!

JESSE.

Let not thy youth be dazzled, O my ſon!
With deeds of bold emprize, as valour only
Were virtue, and the gentle arts of peace,
Of truth, and juſtice, were not worth thy care.
When thou ſhalt view the ſplendors of the war,
The gay capariſon, the burniſh'd ſhield,
The plume-crown'd helmet, and the glitt'ring ſpear,
Scorn not the humble virtues of the ſhade,
Nor think that Heav'n views only with applauſe
The active merit and the buſy toil
Of heroes, ſtateſmen, and the buſtling ſons
Of public care. Theſe have their juſt reward,
In wealth, in honours, and the well earn'd fame

Their

Their high achievements bring. 'Tis in this view
That virtue is her proper recompenſe:
Wealth, as its natural conſequence, will flow
From induſtry: toil with ſucceſs is crown'd:
From ſplendid actions high renown will ſpring.
Such is the uſual courſe of human things;
For Wiſdom Infinite permits, that thus
Effects to cauſes be proportionate,
And nat'ral ends by nat'ral means achiev'd.
But in the future eſtimate which Heav'n
Will make of things terreſtrial, know, my ſon,
That no inferior bleſſing is reſerv'd
For the mild paſſive virtues: meek Content,
Heroic Self-denial, nobler far
Than all th' achievements noiſy fame reports,
When her ſhrill trump proclaims the proud ſucceſs
Which deſolates the nations. But, on earth,
Theſe are not always proſperous — mark the cauſe:
Eternal Juſtice keeps them for the bliſs

Of final recompence, for the dread day
Of gen'ral retribution. O, my ſon!
The oſtentatious virtues which ſtill preſs
For notice and for praiſe; the brilliant deeds
Which live but in the eye of obſervation,
Theſe have their meed at once. But there's a
joy
To the fond votaries of Fame unknown,
To hear the ſtill ſmall voice of Conſcience ſpeak
Its whiſp'ring plaudit to the ſilent ſoul.
Heav'n notes the ſigh afflicted Goodneſs heaves;
Hears the low plaint by human ear unheard,
And from the cheek of patient Sorrow wipes
The tear, by mortal eye unſeen or ſcorn'd.

DAVID.

As Hermon's dews their grateful freſhneſs
ſhed,
And cheer the herbage, and the flow'rs renew,
So do thy words a quick'ning balm infuſe,
And grateful ſink in my delighted ſoul.

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JESSE.

Go then, my child! and may the gracious God
Who blefs'd our fathers blefs my much lov'd son!

DAVID.

Farewell, my father! — and of this be fure,
That not one precept from thy honour'd lips
Shall fall by me unnotic'd; not one grace,
One venerable virtue which adorns
Thy daily life, but I, with watchful care
And due obfervance, will in mine tranfplant it.
[*Exit* DAVID.

JESSE.

He 's gone! and ftill my aching eyes purfue
And ftrain their orbs ftill longer to behold him.
Oh! who can tell when I may next embrace him?
Who can declare the counfels of the Lord?
Or when the moment pre-ordain'd by Heav'n

To

To fill his great defigns, may come? This fon,
This bleffing of my age, is fet apart
For high exploits; the chofen inftrument
Of all-difpofing Heav'n for mighty deeds.
Still I recall the day, and to my mind
The fcene is ever prefent, when the Seer,
Illuftrious Samuel, to the humble fhades
Of Bethlehem came, pretending facrifice,
To fcreen his errand from the jealous king.
He fanctify'd us firft, me and my fons;
For fanctity increas'd fhould ftill precede
Increafe of dignity. When he declar'd
He came, commiffion'd from on High, to find,
Among the fons of Jeffe, Ifrael's king,
Aftonifhment entranc'd my wond'ring foul!
Yet was it not a wild, tumultuous blifs;
Such rafh delight as promis'd honours yield
To light vain minds: no, 'twas a doubtful joy,
Chaftis'd by tim'rous virtue, left a gift
So fplendid and fo dang'rous might deftroy
Him it was meant to raife. My eldeft born,
Eliab, tall of ftature, I prefented;

But

But God, who judges not by outward form,
But tries the heart, forbade the holy prophet
To choose my eldest born. For Saul, he said,
Gave proof, that fair proportion, and the grace
Of limb or feature, ill repaid the want
Of virtue. All my other sons alike
By Samuel were rejected: till, at last,
On my young boy, on David's chosen head,
The prophet pour'd the consecrated oil.
Yet ne'er did pride elate him, ne'er did scorn
For his rejected elders swell his heart.
Not in such gentle charity to him
His haughtier brothers live: but all he pardons.
To meditation, and to humble toil,
To pray'r, and praise devoted, here he dwells.
O may the Graces which adorn retreat
One day delight a court! record his name
With saints and prophets, dignify his race,
And may the sacred songs his leisure frames
Instruct mankind, and sanctify a world!

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART II.

Scene—The Camp.

ELIAB, ABINADAB, ABNER, ISRAELITES.

ELIAB.

STILL is th' event of this long war uncertain:
Still do the adverſe hoſts, on either ſide,
Protract, with ling'ring caution, an encounter,
Which muſt to one be fatal.

ABINADAB.

This deſcent,
Thus to the very confines of our land,
Proclaims the ſanguine hope that fires the foe.
In Ephes-dammim boldly they encamp:
Th' uncircumcis'd Philiſtines pitch their tents
On Judah's hallow'd earth.

ELIAB.

Full forty days
Has the inſulting giant, proud Goliath,
The champion of Philiſtia, fiercely challeng'd
Some Iſraelitiſh foe. But who ſo vain
To dare ſuch force unequal? who ſo bent
On ſure deſtruction, to accept his terms,
And ruſh on death, beneath the giant force
Of his enormous bulk?

ABINADAB.

'Tis near the time
When in th' adjacent valley which divides
Th' oppoſing armies, he is wont to make
His daily challenge.

ELIAB.

Much I marvel, brother,
No greetings from our father reach our ears.
With eaſe and plenty bleſs'd, he little recks

The daily hardſhips which his ſons endure.
But ſee! behold his darling boy approaches!

ABINADAB.

How, David here! whence this unlook'd-for
guest?

ELIAB.

A ſpy upon our actions; ſent, no doubt,
To ſcan our deeds, with beardleſs gravity
Affecting wiſdom; to obſerve each word,
To magnify the venial faults of youth,
And conſtrue harmleſs mirth to foul offence.

Enter DAVID.

DAVID.

All hail, my deareſt brothers!

ELIAB.

Means thy greeting
True love, or arrogant ſcorn?

DAVID.

DAVID.

Oh, moſt true love!
Sweet as the precious ointment which bedew'd
The ſacred head of Aaron, and deſcended
Upon his hallow'd veſt; ſo ſweet, my brothers,
Is fond fraternal amity: ſuch love
As my touch'd boſom feels at your approach.

ELIAB.

Still that fine glozing ſpeech, thoſe holy ſaws,
And all that trick of ſtudied ſanctity,
Of ſmooth-turn'd periods and trim eloquence,
Which charms thy doating father! But confeſs,
What doſt thou here? Is it to ſoothe thy pride,
And gratify thy vain deſire to roam
In queſt of pleaſures unallow'd? or com'ſt thou,
A willing ſpy, to note thy brothers' deeds?
Where haſt thou left thoſe few poor ſtraggling ſheep?
More ſuited to thy ignorance and years
The care of thoſe, than here to wander idly:
Why cam'ſt thou hither?

DAVID.

DAVID.

Is there not a cauſe?
Why that diſpleaſure kindling in thine eye,
My angry brother? why thoſe taunts unkind?
Not idly bent on ſport; not to delight
Mine eye with all this gay parade of war;
To gratify a roaving appetite,
Or fondly to indulge a curious ear
With any tale of rumour, am I come:
But to approve myſelf a loving brother.
I bring the bleſſing of your aged ſire,
With gifts of ſuch plain cates and rural viands
As ſuit his frugal fortune. Tell me now,
Where the bold captain of your hoſt encamps?

ELIAB.

Wherefore inquire? what boots it thee to know?
Behold him there: great Abner, fam'd in arms.

DAVID.

I bring thee, mighty Abner, from my father,

A ſimple

(A ſimple ſhepherd ſwain in yonder vale,)
Such humble gifts as ſhepherd ſwains beſtow.

ABNER.

Thanks, gentle youth! with pleaſure I receive
The grateful off'ring. Why does thy quick eye
Thus wander with unſatisfy'd delight?

DAVID.

New as I am to all the trade of war,
Each ſound has novelty; each thing I ſee
Attracts attention; every noiſe I hear
Awakes confus'd emotions; indiſtinct,
Yet full of charming tumult, ſweet diſtraction.
'Tis all delightful hurry! Oh! the joy
Of young ideas painted on the mind,
In the warm glowing colours fancy ſpreads
On objects not yet known, when all is new,
And all is lovely! Ah! what warlike ſound
Salutes my raviſh'd ear?

[*Sound of trumpet.*

ABNER.

'Tis the Philiſtine,
Proclaiming, by his herald, through the ranks,
His near approach. Each morning he repeats
His challenge to our bands.

DAVID.

Ha! what Philiſtine?
Who is he?

ELIAB.

Wherefore aſk? for thy raw youth
And ruſtic ignorance, 't were fitter learn
Some rural art! ſome ſecret to prevent
Contagion in thy flocks; ſome better means
To ſave their fleece immaculate. Theſe mean arts
Of ſoft inglorious peace far better ſuit
Thy low obſcurity, than thus to ſeek
High things pertaining to exploits of arms.

DAVID.

DAVID.

Urg'd as I am I will not anſwer thee.
Who conquers his own ſpirit, O my brother!
He is the only conqueror. — Again
That ſhout myſterious! Pray you, (*to Abner,*) tell
me who
This proud Philiſtine is, who ſends defiance
To Iſrael's hardy chieftains?

ABNER.

Stranger youth!
So lovely and ſo mild is thy demeanor,
So gentle and ſo patient; ſuch the air
Of candour and of courage which adorns
Thy blooming features, thou haſt won my love:
And I will tell thee.

DAVID.

Mighty Abner, thanks!

ABNER.

Thrice, and no more, he founds, his daily
rule!
This man of war, this champion of Philiftia,
Is of the fons of Anak's giant-race:
Goliath is his name. His fearful ftature,
Unparallel'd in Ifrael, meafures more
Than twice three cubits. On his tow'ring head
A helm of burnifh'd brafs the giant wears,
So pond'rous, it wou'd crufh the ftouteft man
In all our hofts. A coat of mailed armour
Guards his capacious trunk! compar'd with
which,
The ampleft oak that fpreads his rugged arms
In Bafhan's groves, were fmall. About his neck
A fhining corflet hangs. On his vaft thigh
The plaited cuirafs, firmly jointed, ftands.
But who fhall tell the wonders of his fpear,
And hope to gain belief! Of maffive iron
Its temper'd frame; not lefs than the broad
beam

To

To which the busy weaver hangs his loom:
Not to be wielded by a mortal hand,
Save by his own. An armour-bearer walks
Before this mighty champion, in his hand
Bearing the giant's shield. Thrice ev'ry morn
His herald sound the trumpet of defiance!
Off'ring at once to end the long-drawn war
In single combat, 'gainst that hardy foe
Who dares encounter him.

DAVID.

Say, mighty Abner,
What are the haughty terms of his defiance?

ABNER.

Proudly he stalks around th' extremest bounds
Of Elah's vale. His herald sounds the note
Of offer'd battle. Then the furious giant,
With such a voice as from the troubled sky
In vollied thunder breaks, thus sends his challenge:
"Why do you set your battle in array,

Ye men of Iſrael? Wherefore waſte the lives
Of needleſs thouſands? Why protract a war
Which may at once be ended? Are not you
Servants to Saul your king? and am not I,
With triumph let me ſpeak it, a Philiſtine?
Chooſe out a man from all your armed hoſts,
Of courage moſt approv'd, and I will meet
him;
His ſingle arm to mine. Th' event of this
Shall fix the fate of Iſrael and Philiſtia.
If victory favour him, then will we live
Your tributary ſlaves; but if my arm
Be crown'd with conqueſt, you ſhall then live
ours.
Give me a man, if your effeminate bands
A man can boaſt. Your armies I defy!"

DAVID.

What ſhall be done to him who ſhall ſubdue
This vile idolater?

ABNER.

He ſhall receive
Such ample bounties, ſuch profuſe rewards,
As might inflame the old, or warm the coward,
Were not the odds ſo deſperate.

DAVID.

Say what are they?

ABNER.

The royal Saul has promis'd that bold hero
Who ſhould encounter and ſubdue Goliath,
All dignity and favour; that his houſe
Shall be ſet free from tribute, and ennobled
With the firſt honours Iſrael has to give.
And for the gallant conqueror himſelf,
No leſs a recompenſe than the fair princeſs,
Our monarch's peerleſs daughter.

DAVID.

Beauteous Michal!

It is indeed a boon which kings might ſtrive for.
And has none anſwer'd yet this bold defiance?
What! all this goodly hoſt of Iſraelites!
God's own peculiar people! all afraid
T' aſſert God's injur'd honour and their own?
Where is the king, who, in his early youth
Wrought deeds of fame! Where princely Jonathan?
Not ſo the gallant youth Philiſtia fear'd
At Bozez and at Seneh *; when the earth
Shook from her deep foundations, to behold
The wond'rous carnage of his ſingle hand
On the uncircumcis'd. When he exclaim'd,
With glorious confidence—"Shall numbers awe me?
God will protect his own: with him to ſave,
It boots not, friends, by many or by few."
This was an hero! Why does he delay
To meet this boaſter? For thy courteſy,
Thrice noble Abner, I am bound to thank thee!
Would'ſt thou complete thy gen'rous offices?
I dare not aſk it.

ABNER.

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

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ABNER.

Speak thy wishes freely:
My soul inclines to serve thee.

DAVID.

Then, O Abner,
Conduct me to the king! There is a cause
Will justify this boldness!

ELIAB.

Braggard, hold!

ABNER.

I take thee at thy word; and will, with speed,
Conduct thee to my royal master's presence.
In yonder tent the anxious monarch waits
Th' event of this day's challenge.

DAVID.

Noble Abner,
Accept my thanks. Now to thy private ear,

If

If ſo thy grace permit, I will unfold
My ſecret ſoul, and eaſe my lab'ring breaſt,
Which pants with high deſigns, and beats for
glory.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART III.

Scene—Saul's tent.

SAUL.

WHY was I made a king? what I have gain'd
In envy'd greatneſs and uneaſy pow'r,
I 've loſt in peace of mind, in virtue loſt!
Why did deceitful tranſports fire my ſoul
When Samuel plac'd upon my youthful brow
The crown of Iſrael? I had known content,
Nay happineſs, if happineſs unmix'd
To mortal man were known, had I ſtill liv'd
Among the humble tents of Benjamin.
A ſhepherd's occupation was my joy,
And every guiltleſs day was crown'd with peace.
But now, a ſullen cloud for ever hangs

O'er

O'er the faint ſunſhine of my brighteſt hours,
Dark'ning the golden promiſe of the morn.
I ne'er ſhall taſte the dear domeſtic joys
My meaneſt ſubjects know. True, I have ſons,
Whoſe virtues wou'd have charm'd a private
man,
And drawn down bleſſings on their humble ſire.
I love their virtues too; but 'tis a love
Which jealouſy has poiſon'd. Jonathan
Is all a father's fondneſs cou'd conceive
Of amiable and good — Of that no more!
He is too popular; the people doat
Upon th' ingenuous graces of his youth.
Curs'd popularity! which makes a father
Deteſt the merit of a ſon he loves.
How did their fond idolatry, perforce,
Reſcue his ſentenc'd life, when doom'd by lot
To periſh at Beth-aven *, for the breach
Of ſtrict injunction, that of all my bands,
Not one that day ſhould taſte of food and live!
My ſubjects clamour at this tedious war,

Yet

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

Yet of my num'rous armed chiefs not one
Has courage to engage this man of Gath.
O for a champion bold enough to face
This giant-boaſter, whoſe repeated threats
Strike thro' my inmoſt ſoul! There was a time—
Of that no more!—I am not what I was.
Shou'd valiant Jonathan accept the challenge,
'Twould but increaſe his influence, raiſe his fame,
And make the crown ſit looſely on my brow.
Ill cou'd my wounded ſpirit brook the voice
Of harſh compariſon 'twixt ſire and ſon.

SAUL, ABNER.

ABNER.

What meditation holds thee thus engag'd,
O king! and keeps thine active ſpirit bound;
When buſy war far other cares demands
Than ruminating thought and pale deſpair?

SAUL.

Abner, draw near. My weary ſoul ſinks down
Beneath

Beneath the heavy preſſure of misfortune.
O for that ſpirit which inflam'd my breaſt
With ſudden fervour, when, among the ſeers
And holy ſages my prophetic voice
Was heard attentive, and th' aſtoniſh'd throng,
Wond'ring, exclaim'd, — 'Is Saul among the Prophets?'
Where 's that bold arm which quell'd th' Amalekite,
And nobly ſpar'd fierce Agag and his flocks?
'Tis paſt! the light of Iſrael now is quench'd:
Shorn of his beams, my ſun of glory ſets!
Riſe Moab, Edon, angry Ammon riſe!
Come Gaza, Aſhdod come! let Ekron boaſt,
And Aſkelon rejoice, for Saul is — nothing.

ABNER.

I bring thee news, O king!

SAUL.

My valiant uncle!
What can avail thy news? A ſoul oppreſs'd

Refuses ftill to hear the charmer's voice,
Howe'er enticingly he charm. What news
Can footh my fickly foul, while Gath's fell giant
Repeats each morning to my frighten'd hofts
His daring challenge, none accepting it?

ABNER.

It is accepted.

SAUL.

Ha! By whom? how? when?
What prince, what gen'ral, what illuftrious hero,
What vet'ran chief, what warrior of renown,
Will dare to meet the haughty foe's defiance?
Speak, my brave gen'ral! noble Abner, fpeak!

ABNER.

No prince, no warrior, no illuftrious chief,
No vet'ran hero dares accept the challenge;
But what will move thy wonder, mighty king,
One train'd to peaceful deeds, and new to arms,
A fimple fhepherd fwain!

SAUL.

O mockery!
No more of this light tale, it ſuits but ill
Thy bearded gravity: or rather tell it
To credulous age, or weak believing women;
They love whate'er is marvellous, and doat
On deeds prodigious and incredible,
Which ſober ſenſe rejects. I laugh to think
Of thy extravagance. A ſhepherd's boy
Encounter him whom nations dread to meet!

ABNER.

Is valour, then, peculiar to high birth?
If Heav'n had ſo decreed, know, ſcornful king,
That Saul the Benjamite had never reign'd.
No! — glory darts her ſoul-pervading ray
On thrones and cottages, regardleſs ſtill
Of all the artificial, nice diſtinctions
Vain human cuſtoms make.

SAUL.

SAUL.

Where is this youth?

ABNER.

Without thy tent he waits. Such humble ſweetneſs,
Fir'd with the ſecret conſcience of deſert;
Such manly bearing, temper'd with ſuch ſoftneſs,
And ſo adorn'd with ev'ry outward charm
Of graceful form and feature, ſaw I never.

SAUL.

Bring me the youth.

ABNER.

He waits thy royal pleaſure.
[*Exit* ABNER.

SAUL.

What muſt I think? Abner himſelf is brave,
And ſkill'd in human kind: nor does he judge

So lightly, to be caught by ſpecious words
And Fraud's ſmooth artifice, were there not marks
Of worth intrinſic. But behold, he comes!
The youth too with him! Juſtly did he praiſe
The candour which adorns his open brow.

Re-enter ABNER *and* DAVID.

DAVID.

Hail, mighty king!

ABNER.

Behold thy proffer'd champion!

SAUL.

Art thou the youth whoſe high heroic zeal
Aſpires to meet the giant ſon of Anak?

DAVID.

If ſo the king permit.

SAUL.

Impoffible!
Why, what experience has thy youth of arms?
Where, ftripling, didft *thou* learn the trade of war?
Beneath what hoary vet'ran haft *thou* ferv'd?
What feats haft *thou* achiev'd, what daring deeds?
What well-rang'd phalanx, fay, what charging hofts,
What hard campaigns, what fieges haft thou feen?
Haft thou e'er fcal'd the city's rampir'd wall,
Or hurl'd the miffile dart, or learn'd to poife
The warrior's deathful fpear? The ufe of targe,
Of helm, and buckler, is to thee unknown.

DAVID.

Arms I have feldom feen. I little know
Of war's proud difcipline. The trumpet's clang,
The fhock of charging hofts, the rampir'd wall,
Th' embattled phalanx, and the warrior's fpear,
The ufe of targe and helm to me is new.

My zeal for God, my patriot love of Ifrael,
My rev'rence for my king, behold my claims!

SAUL.

But, gentle youth! thou haft no fame in arms.
Renown, with her fhrill clarion, never bore
Thy honour'd name to many a land remote;
From the fair regions where Euphrates laves
Affyria's borders to the diftant Nile.

DAVID.

True, mighty king! I am indeed alike
Unblefs'd by Fortune and to Fame unknown;
A lowly fhepherd-fwain of Judah's tribe:
But greatnefs ever fprings from low beginnings.
That very Nile thou mention'ft, whofe broad ftream
Bears fruitfulnefs and health thro' many a clime,
From an unknown, penurious, fcanty fource
Took its firft rife. The foreft oak, which fhades
Thy fultry troops in many a toilfome march,
Once an unheeded acorn lay. O king!

Who

Who ne'er begins can never aught atchieve
Of glorious. Thou thyſelf waſt once unknown,
Till fair occaſion brought thy worth to light.
Far higher views inſpire my youthful heart
Than human praiſe: I ſeek to vindicate
Th' inſulted honour of the God I ſerve.

ABNER.

'Tis nobly ſaid.

SAUL.

I love thy ſpirit, youth!
But dare not truſt thy inexperienc'd arm
Againſt a giant's might. The ſight of blood,
Tho' brave thou feel'ſt when peril is not nigh,
Will pale thy ardent cheek.

DAVID.

Not ſo, O king!
This youthful arm has been imbru'd in blood,
Tho' yet no blood of man has ever ſtain'd it.

Thy fervant's occupation is a fhepherd.
With jealous care I watch'd my father's flock:
A brindled lion and a furious bear
Forth from the thicket rufh'd upon the fold,
Seiz'd a young lamb, and tore their bleating fpoil.
Urg'd by compaffion for my helplefs charge,
I felt a new-born vigour nerve my arm;
And, eager, on the foaming monfters rufh'd.
The famifh'd lion by his grifly beard,
Enrag'd, I caught, and fmote him to the ground.
The panting monfter ftruggling in my gripe,
Shook terribly his briftling mane, and lafh'd
His own gaunt, goary fides; fiercely he ground
His gnafhing teeth, and roll'd his ftarting eyes,
Bloodfhot with agony; then with a groan,
That wak'd the echoes of the mountain, dy'd.
Nor did his grim affociate 'fcape my arm;
Thy fervant flew the lion and the bear;
I kill'd them both, and bore their fhaggy fpoils
In triumph home: and fhall I fear to meet
Th' uncircumcis'd Philiftine! No: that God

Who

Who ſav'd me from the bear's deſtructive fang
And hungry lion's jaw, will not he ſave me
From this idolater?

SAUL.

He will, he will!
Go, noble youth! be valiant and be bleſs'd!
The God thou ſerv'ſt will ſhield thee in the fight,
And nerve thy arm with more than mortal
ſtrength.

ABNER.

So the bold Nazarite * a lion ſlew:
An earneſt of his victories o'er Philiſtia!

SAUL.

Go, Abner; ſee the youth be well equipp'd
With ſhield and ſpear. Be it thy care to grace
him
With all the fit accoutrements of war.
The

* Sampſon. See Judges, chap. xiv.

The choiceſt mail from my rich armory take,
And gird upon his thigh my own try'd ſword,
Of nobleſt temper'd ſteel.

ABNER.

I ſhall obey.

DAVID.

Pardon, O king! the coat of plaited mail
Theſe limbs have never known; it would not ſhield,
'Twould but encumber one who never felt
The weight of armour.

SAUL.

Take thy wiſh, my ſon!
Thy ſword then, and the God of Jacob guard thee!

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART IV.

Scene—Another Part of the Camp.

DAVID (*kneeling*).

Eternal Juſtice! in whoſe awful ſcale
Th' event of battle hangs! Eternal Truth!
Whoſe beam illumines all! Eternal Mercy!
If, by thy attributes I may, unblam'd,
Addreſs thee; Lord of Glory! hear me now:
O teach theſe hands to war, theſe arms to fight!
Thou ever preſent help in time of need!
Let thy broad mercy, as a ſhield, defend,
And let thine everlaſting arms ſupport me!
Strong in thy ſtrength, in thy protection ſafe.
Then, tho' the heathen rage, I ſhall not fear.
Jehovah, be my buckler! Mighty Lord!

Thou

Thou who haſt deign'd by humble inſtruments
To manifeſt the wonders of thy might,
Be preſent with me now! 'Tis thine own cauſe!
Thy wiſdom ſees events, thy goodneſs plans
Schemes baffling our conception — and, 'tis ſtill
Omnipotence which executes the deed
Of high deſign, tho' by a feeble arm!
I feel a ſecret impulſe drive me on;
And my ſoul ſprings impatient for the fight!
'Tis not the heated ſpirits, or warm blood
Of ſanguine youth with which my boſom burns;
And, tho' I thirſt to meet th' inſulting foe,
And pant for glory, 'tis not, witneſs Heaven!
'Tis not the ſinful luſt of fading fame,
The periſhable praiſe of mortal man;
His praiſe I covet, whoſe applauſe is Life.

DAVID, ELIAB, ISRAELITES.

ELIAB.

What do I hear? thou truant! thou haſt dar'd
E'en to the awful preſence of the king
Bear thy preſumption!

DAVID.

He who fears the Lord
Shall boldly ſtand before the face of kings,
And ſhall not be aſham'd.

ELIAB.

But what wild dream
Has urg'd thee to this deed of deſp'rate raſhneſs?
Thou mean'ſt, ſo I have learn'd, to meet Goliath,
His ſingle arm to thine.

DAVID.

'Tis what I purpoſe,
Ev'n on this ſpot. Each moment I expect
His wiſh'd approach.

ELIAB.

Go home; return, for ſhame!
Nor madly draw deſtruction on thy head.
Thy doating father, when thy ſhepherd's coat,
Drench'd

Drench'd in thy blood, is brought him, will
lament,
And rend his furrow'd cheek and ſilver hair,
As if ſome mighty loſs had touch'd his age;
And mourn, even as the partial patriarch mourn'd
When Joſeph's bloody garment he receiv'd
From his leſs dear, not leſs deſerving, ſons.
But whence that glitt'ring ornament which
hangs
Uſeleſs upon thy thigh?

DAVID.

'Tis the king's gift.
But thou art right; it ſuits not me, my brother!
Nor ſword I mean to uſe, nor ſpear to poiſe,
Leſt men ſhou'd ſay I put my truſt in arms,
Not in the Lord of Hoſts.

ELIAB.

Then thou indeed
Art bent to ſeek thy death?

DAVID.

DAVID.

And what is death?
Is it ſo terrible to die, my brother?
Or grant it terrible, is it for that
The leſs inevitable? If, indeed
We cou'd by ſtratagem elude the blow,
When ſome high duty calls us forth to die,
And thus for ever ſhun it, and eſcape
The univerſal lot, — then fond ſelf-love,
Then cautious prudence, boldly might produce
Their fine-ſpun arguments, their learn'd harangues,
Their cobweb arts, their phraſe ſophiſtical,
Their ſubtle doubts, and all the ſpecious trick
Of ſelfiſh cunning lab'ring for its end.
But ſince, howe'er protracted, death will come,
Why fondly ſtudy, with ingenious pains,
To put it off! — To breathe a little longer
Is to defer our fate, but not to ſhun it.
Small gain! which Wiſdom with indiff'rent eye
Beholds. Why wiſh to drink the bitter dregs

Of

Of life's exhaufted chalice, whofe laft runnings,
Ev'n at the beft, are vapid! Why not die
(If Heav'n fo will) in manhood's op'ning bloom,
When all the flufh of life is gay about us;
When fprightly youth, with many a new-born joy,
Solicits every fenfe! So may we then
Prefent a facrifice, unmeet indeed,
(Ah, how unmeet!) but lefs unworthy far,
Than the world's leavings; than a worn-out heart,
By vice enfeebled, and by vain defires
Sunk and exhaufted!

ELIAB.

Hark! I hear a found
Of multitudes approaching!

DAVID.

'Tis the giant!
I fee him not, but hear his meafur'd pace.

ELIAB.

Look, where his pond'rous ſhield is borne
before him!

DAVID.

Like a broad moon its ample diſk protends.
But ſoft! — what unknown prodigy appears?
A moving mountain cas'd in poliſh'd braſs!

ELIAB (*getting behind* DAVID).

How's this? thou doſt not tremble. Thy firm
joints
Betray no fear; thy accents are not broken;
Thy cheek retains its red; thine eye its luſtre!
He comes more near! Doſt thou not fear him
now?

DAVID.

No.
The vaſt coloſſal ſtatue nor inſpires
Reſpect nor fear. Mere magnitude of form,

Without

Without proportion'd intellect and valour,
Strikes not my foul with rev'rence or with awe.

ELIAB.

Near, and more near he comes! I hold it rafh
To ftay fo near him, and expofe a life
Which may, hereafter ferve the ftate. Farewell.
[*Exit.*

[GOLIATH *advances, clad in complete armour. One bearing his fhield precedes him. The oppofing armies are feen at a diftance, drawn up on each fide of the valley.* GOLIATH *begins to fpeak before he comes on.* DAVID *ftands in the fame place, with an air of indifference.*]

GOLIATH.

Where is the mighty man of war, who dares
Accept the challenge of Philiftia's chief?
What victor king, what gen'ral drench'd in blood,
Claims this high privilege? What are his rights?
What proud credentials does the boafter bring
To prove his claim? What cities laid in afhes?

What

What ruin'd provinces? What ſlaughter'd
realms?
What heads of heroes, and what hearts of kings,
In battle kill'd, or at his altars ſlain,
Has he to boaſt? Is his bright armory
Thick ſet with ſpears, and ſwords, and coats of
mail
Of vanquiſh'd nations, by his ſingle arm
Subdued? Where is the mortal man ſo bold,
So much a wretch, ſo out of love with life,
To dare the weight of this uplifted ſpear,
Which never fell innoxious? Yet I ſwear,
I grudge the glory to his parting ſoul
To fall by this right hand. 'Twill ſweeten death,
To know he had the honour to contend
With the dread ſon of Anak. Lateſt time
From blank oblivion ſhall retrieve *his* name
Who dar'd to periſh in unequal fight
With Gath's triumphant champion. Come, ad-
vance.
Philiſtia's gods to Iſrael's. Sound, my herald —
Sound for the battle ſtrait.

[Herald ſounds the trumpet.

DAVID.

Behold thy foe!

GOLIATH.

I ſee him not.

DAVID.

Behold him here!

GOLIATH.

Say, where!

Direct my ſight. I do not war with boys.

DAVID.

I ſtand prepar'd: thy ſingle arm to mine.

GOLIATH.

Why this is mockery, Minion! it may chance
To coſt thee dear. Sport not with things above thee!
But tell me who of all this num'rous hoſt

Expects

Expects his death from me? Which is the man
Whom Israel sends to meet my bold defiance?

DAVID.

Th' election of my sov'reign falls on me.

GOLIATH.

On thee! On thee! By Dagon, 'tis too much!
Thou curled Minion! thou a nation's champion!
'Twou'd move my mirth at any other time;
But trifling 's out of tune. Begone, light boy!
And tempt me not too far.

DAVID.

I do defy thee,
Thou foul idolater! Hast thou not scorn'd
The armies of the living God I serve?
By me he will avenge upon thy head
Thy nation's sins and thine. Arm'd with his name,
Unshrinking, I dare meet the stoutest foe
That ever bath'd his hostile spear in blood.

GOLIATH (*ironically*).

Indeed! 'tis wond'rous well. Now, by my
Gods,
The ftripling plays the orator! Vain boy!
Keep clofe to that fame bloodlefs war of words,
And thou fhalt ftill be fafe. Tongue-valiant
warrior!
Where is thy fylvan crook, with garlands hung,
Of idle field-flowers? Where thy wanton harp,
Thou dainty finger'd hero? better ftrike
Its notes lafcivious, or the lulling lute
Touch foftly, than provoke the trumpet's rage.
I will not ftain the honour of my fpear
With thy inglorious blood. Shall that fair cheek
Be fcarr'd with wounds unfeemly? Rather go
And hold fond dalliance with the Syrian maids;
To wanton meafures dance, and let them braid
The bright luxuriance of thy golden hair;
They, for their loft Adonis, may miftake
Thy dainty form.

DAVID.

DAVID.

Peace, thou unhallow'd railer!
O tell it not in Gath, nor let the ſound
Reach Aſkelon, how once your ſlaughter'd lords
By mighty Samſon * found one common grave;
When his broad ſhoulder the firm pillars heav'd,
And to its baſe the tott'ring fabric ſhook.

GOLIATH.

Inſulting boy! perhaps thou haſt not heard
The Infamy of that inglorious day,
When your weak hoſts at Eben-ezer † pitch'd
Their quick-abandon'd tents? Then, when your ark,
Your taliſman, your charm, your boaſted pledge
Of ſafety and ſucceſs, was tamely loſt!
And yet not tamely, ſince by me 'twas won.
When with this good right arm I thinn'd your ranks,

And

* Judges, c. xvi. † 1 Samuel, c. v.

And bravely cruſh'd, beneath a ſingle blow
The choſen guardians of this vaunted ſhrine,
Hophni * and Phineas. The fam'd ark itſelf
I bore to Aſhdod.

DAVID.

I remember too,
Since thou provok'ſt th' unwelcome truth, how all
Your bluſhing prieſts beheld their idol's ſhame;
When proſtrate Dagon fell before the ark,
And your frail god was ſhiver'd. Then Philiſtia,
Idolatrous Philiſtia, flew for ſuccour
To Iſrael's help, and all her ſmitten nobles
Confeſs'd the Lord was God; and the bleſs'd ark,
Gladly, with reverential awe reſtor'd.

GOLIATH.

By Aſhdod's fane thou ly'ſt. Now will I meet
thee,

Thou

* Commentators ſay, that the Chaldee Paraphraſe makes Goliath boaſt that he had killed Hophni and Phineas, and taken the ark priſoner.

Thou inſect warrior, ſince thou dar'ſt me thus!
Already I behold thy mangled limbs,
Diſſever'd each from each, ere long to feed
The fierce blood-ſnuffing vulture. Mark me well.
Around my ſpear I'll twiſt thy ſhining locks,
And toſs in air thy head all gaſh'd with wounds,
Thy lip yet quiv'ring with the dire convulſion
Of recent death! — Art thou not terrify'd?

DAVID.

No:
True courage is not mov'd by breath of words:
While the raſh bravery of boiling blood,
Impetuous, knows no ſettled principle.
A fev'riſh tide, it has its ebbs and flows,
As ſpirits riſe or fall, as wine inflames,
Or circumſtances change: But inborn courage,
The gen'rous child of Fortitude and Faith,
Holds its firm empire in the conſtant ſoul;
And like the ſtedfaſt pole-ſtar, never once
From the ſame fix'd and faithful point declines.

GOLIATH.

The curfes of Philiftia's gods be on thee!
This fine-drawn fpeech is meant to lengthen out
That little life thy words pretend to fcorn.

DAVID.

Ha! fay'ft thou fo? Come on then. Mark us well.
Thou com'ft to me with fword, and fpear, and fhield: —
In the dread name of Ifrael's God I come;
The living Lord of Hofts, whom thou defy'ft!
Yet tho' no fhield I bring, no arms except
Thefe five fmooth ftones I gather'd from the brook,
With fuch a fimple fling as fhepherds ufe, —
Yet all expos'd, defencelefs as I am,
The God I ferve fhall give thee up a prey
To my victorious arm. This day I mean
To make th' uncircumcifed tribes confefs
There is a God in Ifrael. I will give thee,

Spite

Spite of thy vaunted ſtrength and giant bulk,
To glut the carrion kites. Nor thee alone;
The mangled carcaſſes of your thick hoſts
Shall ſpread the plains of Elah, till Philiſtia,
Thro' all her trembling tents and flying bands,
Shall own that Judah's God is God indeed!
—I dare thee to the trial.

GOLIATH.

Follow me—
In this good ſpear I truſt.

DAVID.

I truſt in Heav'n!
The God of battle ſtimulates my arm,
And fires my ſoul with ardor not its own.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART V.

Scene—The Tent of Saul.

SAUL (*rising from his couch*).

OH! that I knew the black and midnight arts
Of wizard sorcery! that I could call
The slumb'ring spirit from the shades of hell!
Or, like Chaldean sages, cou'd foreknow
Th' event of things unacted! I might then
Anticipate my fortune. How I 'm fall'n!
The sport of vain chimeras, the weak slave
Of fear and Fancy; coveting to know
The arts obscene, which foul diviners use.
Thick blood and moping melancholy lead
To baleful Superstition,—that fell fiend,

Whose

Whofe with'ring charms blaſt the fair bloom of
virtue.
Why did my wounded pride with ſcorn reject
The wholeſome truths which holy Samuel told
me?
Why drive him from my preſence? he might
now
Raiſe my ſunk ſoul, and my benighted mind
Enlighten with religion's cheering ray.
He dar'd to menace me with loſs of empire;
And I, for that bold honeſty, diſmiſs'd him.
"Another ſhall poſſeſs thy throne," he cry'd:
"A ſtranger!" This unwelcome prophecy
Has lin'd my crown and ſtrew'd my couch
with thorns.
Each ray of op'ning merit I diſcern
In friend or foe, diſtracts my troubled ſoul,
Leſt he ſhou'd prove my rival. But this morn,
Ev'n my young champion, lovely as he look'd
In blooming valour, ſtruck me to the ſoul
With Jealouſy's barb'd dart. O Jealouſy,

Thou

Thou ugliest fiend of hell! thy deadly venom
Preys on my vitals, turns the healthful hue
Of my fresh cheek to haggard sallowness,
And drinks my spirit up!

[*A flourish of trumpets, shouting,* &c.

What sounds are those?
The combat is decided. Hark! again
Those shouts proclaim it! Now, O God of Jacob,
If yet thou hast not quite withdrawn from Saul
Thy light and favour, prosper me this once!
But Abner comes! I dread to hear his tale!
Fair Hope, with smiling face but ling'ring foot,
Has long deceiv'd me.

ABNER.

King of Israel, hail!
Now thou art King indeed. The youth has conquer'd:
Goliath's dead.

SAUL.

SAUL.

Oh ſpeak thy tale again,
Leſt my fond ears deceive me!

ABNER.

Thy young champion
Has ſlain the Giant.

SAUL.

Then God is gracious ſtill,
In ſpite of my offences! But, good Abner!
How was it? Tell me all. Where is my champion?
Quick let me preſs him to my grateful heart,
And pay him a king's thanks. And yet, who knows,
This forward friend may prove an active foe!
No more of that. Tell me the whole, brave Abner!
And paint the glorious acts of my young hero!

ABNER.

ABNER.

Full in the centre of the camp they ſtood!
Th' oppoſing armies rang'd on either ſide
In proud array. The haughty Giant ſtalk'd,
Stately acroſs the valley. Next, the youth
With modeſt confidence advanc'd. Nor pomp,
Nor gay parade, nor martial ornament,
His graceful form adorn'd. Goliath ſtrait,
With ſolemn ſtate, began the buſy work
Of dreadful preparation. In one place
His cloſely jointed mail an op'ning left
For air, and only one: the watchful youth
Mark'd that the beaver of his helm was up.
Meanwhile the Giant ſuch a blow devis'd
As wou'd have cruſh'd him. This the youth perceiv'd,
And from his well-directed ſling quick hurl'd,
With dext'rous aim, a ſtone, which ſunk, deep lodg'd,
In the capacious forehead of the foe.
Then with a cry, as loud and terrible

As

As Lybian lions roaring for their young,
Quite ſtunn'd, the furious giant ſtagger'd, reel'd,
And fell: the mighty maſs of man fell prone.
With its own weight his ſhatter'd bulk was
bruis'd.
His clattering arms rung dreadful thro' the field,
And the firm baſis of the ſolid earth
Shook. Chok'd with blood and duſt, he curs'd
his gods,
And died blaſpheming! Strait the victor youth
Drew from its ſheath the giant's pond'rous ſword,
And from th' enormous trunk the goary head
Furious in death he ſever'd. The grim viſage
Look'd threat'ning ſtill, and ſtill frown'd hor-
ribly.

SAUL.

O glorious deed! O valiant conqueror!

ABNER.

The youth ſo calm appear'd, ſo nobly firm,
So cool, yet ſo intrepid, that theſe eyes

Ne'er

Ne'er faw fuch temp'rate valour fo chaftis'd
By modefty.

SAUL.

Thou dwell'ft upon his praife
With needlefs circumftance. 'Twas nobly done;
But others too have fought!

ABNER.

None, none fo bravely.

SAUL.

What follow'd next?

ABNER.

The fhouting Ifraelites
On the Philiftines rufh'd, and ftill purfue
Their routed remnants. In difmay, their bands
Diforder'd fly, while fhouts of loud acclaim
Purfue their brave deliverer. Lo, he comes!
Bearing the Giant's head and fhining fword,
His well-earn'd trophies.

SAUL, ABNER, DAVID.

[DAVID *bearing* GOLIATH'*s head and ſword.*
He kneels and lays both at SAUL'*s feet.*]

SAUL.

Welcome to my heart,
My glorious champion! My deliverer, welcome!
How ſhall I ſpeak the ſwelling gratitude
Of my full heart! or give thee the high praiſe
Thy gallant deeds deſerve!

DAVID.

O mighty king!
Sweet is the breath of praiſe when giv'n by thoſe
Whoſe own high merit claims the praiſe they give.
But let not this one proſperous event,
By Heav'n directed, be aſcrib'd to me;
I might have fought with equal ſkill and courage,
And not have gain'd this conqueſt; then had ſhame,

 Harſh

Harſh obloquy, and foul diſgrace, befall'n me:
But proſp'rous fortune gains the praiſe of valour.

SAUL.

I like not this. In every thing ſuperior!
He ſoars above me (*aſide*). — Modeſt youth
thou 'rt right.
And fortune, as thou ſay'ſt, deſerves the praiſe
We give to human valour.

DAVID.

Rather ſay
The God of Hoſts deſerves it.

SAUL.

Tell me, youth,
What is thy name, and what thy father's houſe?

DAVID.

My name is David; Jeſſe is my ſire:
An humble Bethle'mite of Judah's tribe.

SAUL.

SAUL.

David, the ſon of Jeſſe! Sure, that name
Has been familiar to me. Nay, thy voice,
Thy form, and features, I remember too,
Tho' faint and indiſtinctly.

ABNER.

In this hero
Behold thy ſweet muſician; he whoſe harp
Expell'd the melancholy fiend, whoſe pow'r
Enſlav'd thy ſpirit.

SAUL.

This the modeſt youth,
Whom for his ſkill and virtues I preferr'd
To bear my armour?

DAVID.

I am he, O King!

SAUL.

Why this concealment? tell me, valiant David,
Why didſt thou hide thy birth and name till
now?

DAVID.

O king! I wou'd not aught from favour claim,
Or on remember'd ſervices preſume;
But on the ſtrength of my own actions ſtand,
Ungrac'd and unſupported.

ABNER.

Well he merits
The honours which await him. Why, O king,
Doſt thou delay to bleſs his doubting heart
With his well-earn'd rewards? Thy lovely
daughter,
By right of conqueſt his!

SAUL.

SAUL (*to* DAVID.)

True: thou haſt won her.
She ſhall be thine. Yes, a king's word is paſt.

DAVID.

O boundleſs bleſſing! What! ſhall ſhe be
mine,
For whom contending monarchs might renounce
Their ſlighted crowns!

[*Sounds of muſical inſtruments heard at a diſtance. Shouting and ſinging. A grand proceſſion. Chorus of Hebrew women.*]

SAUL.

How's this? what ſounds of joy
Salute my ears? What means this needleſs
pomp?
This merry ſound of tabret and of harp?
What mean theſe idle inſtruments of triumph?
Theſe women, who in fair proceſſion move,
Making ſweet melody?

ABNER.

To pay due honour
To David are they come.

SAUL (*aſide*).

A rival's praiſe
Is diſcord to my ear! They might have ſpar'd
This idle pageantry; it wounds my ſoul!

[*Martial ſymphony: after which, Chorus of Women ſing.*]

I.

PREPARE! your feſtal rites prepare!
Let your triumphs rend the air!
Idol gods ſhall reign no more:
We the living Lord adore!
Let heathen hoſts on human helps repoſe,
Since Iſrael's God has routed Iſrael's foes.

II. Let

II.

Let remoteſt nations know
Proud Goliath's overthrow.
Fall'n, Philiſtia, is thy truſt,
Dagon mingles with the duſt!
Who fears the Lord of Glory, need not fear
The brazen armour or the lifted ſpear.

III.

See, the routed ſquadrons fly!
Hark! their clamours rend the ſky!
Blood and carnage ſtain the field!
See, the vanquiſh'd nations yield!
Diſmay and terror fill the frighten'd land,
While conq'ring David routs the trembling band.

IV.

Lo! upon the tented field
Royal Saul has thouſands kill'd!
Lo! upon th' enſanguin'd plain
David has ten thouſand ſlain!
Let mighty Saul his vanquiſh'd thouſands tell,
While tenfold triumphs David's victories ſwell.

BELSHAZZAR:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, who didst weaken the nations! ISAIAH.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

BELSHAZZAR, King of Babylon.
NITOCRIS, the Queen-Mother.
Courtiers, Aſtrologers, Paraſites.

DANIEL, the Jewiſh prophet.
Captive Jews, &c. &c.

Scene—Babylon. Time—Night.

The Subject is taken from the Fifth Chapter of the Prophet Daniel.

BELSHAZZAR.

PART I.

Scene—Near the Palace of Babylon.

DANIEL *and* CAPTIVE JEWS.

DANIEL.

PARENT of Life and Light! Sole Source of
Good!
Whofe tender mercies thro' the tide of time,
In long fucceffive order, have fuftain'd,
And fav'd the fons of Ifrael! Thou, whofe pow'r
Deliver'd righteous Noah from the flood,
The whelming flood, the grave of human kind!
Oh Thou, whofe guardian care and out-ftretch'd
hand
Refcu'd young Ifaac from the lifted arm,
Rais'd, at thy bidding to devote a fon,
An only fon, doom'd by his fire to die:

(O faving

(O ſaving faith, by ſuch obedience prov'd
O bleſt obedience, hallow'd thus by faith!)
Thou, who in mercy ſav'dſt the choſen race
In the wild deſert, and didſt there ſuſtain them
By wonder-working love, tho' they rebell'd
And murmur'd at the Miracles that ſav'd them!
O hear thy ſervant Daniel! hear and help!
Thou, whoſe almighty pow'r did after raiſe
Succeſſive leaders to defend our race:
Who ſenteſt valiant Joſhua to the field,
Thy people's champion, to the conqu'ring field,
Where the revolving planet of the night,
Suſpended in her radiant round, was ſtay'd;
And the bright ſun, arreſted in his courſe,
Stupendouſly ſtood ſtill!

CHORUS *of* JEWS.

I.

WHAT ailed thee, that thou ſtood'ſt ſtill,
O Sun! nor did thy flaming orb decline!
And thou, O Moon! in Ajalon's low vale,
Why didſt thou long before thy period ſhine?

II. Was

II.

Was it at Joſhua's dread command,
The leader of the Iſraelitiſh band?
Yes — at a mortal bidding both ſtood ſtill:
'Twas Joſhua's word, but 'twas Jehovah's will.

III.

What all-controlling hand had force
To ſtop eternal Nature's conſtant courſe?
The wand'ring moon to one fix'd ſpot confine,
But HIS whoſe fiat gave them firſt to ſhine?

DANIEL.

O Thou! who, when thy diſcontented hoſt,
Tir'd of Jehovah's rule, deſir'd a king,
In anger gav'ſt them Saul; and then again
Didſt wreſt the regal ſceptre from his hand
To give it David — David, beſt belov'd!
Illuſtrious David! poet, prophet, king;
Thou who didſt ſuffer Solomon the wiſe
To build a glorious temple to thy name, —
O hear

O hear thy ſervants, and forgive us too!
If, by ſevere neceſſity compell'd,
We worſhip here — we have no temple now:
Altar or ſanctuary, none is left.

CHORUS *of* JEWS.

O JUDAH! let thy captive ſons deplore
Thy far-fam'd temple's now no more!
Fall'n is thy ſacred fane, thy glory gone!
Fall'n is thy temple, Solomon!
Ne'er did Barbaric kings behold,
With all their ſhining gems, their burniſh'd gold,
A fane ſo perfect, bright, and fair;
For God himſelf was wont t' inhabit there.
Between the cherubim his glory ſtood,
While the high-prieſt alone the dazzling ſplendor
view'd.

How fondly did the Tyrian artiſt ſtrive
His name to lateſt time ſhould live!
Such wealth the ſtranger wonder'd to behold:
Gold were the tablets, and the vaſes gold.

Of

Of cedar ſuch an ample ſtore,
Exhauſted Lebanon could yield no more.
Bending before the Ruler of the ſky,
Well might the royal founder cry,
Fill'd with an holy dread, a rev'rend fear,
Will God in very deed inhabit here?
The heav'n of heav'ns beneath his feet,
Is for the bright inhabitant unmeet:
Archangels proſtrate wait his high commands,
And will he deign to dwell in temples made with hands?

DANIEL.

Yes, Thou art ever preſent, Pow'r Supreme!
Not circumſcrib'd by time, nor fix'd to ſpace,
Confin'd to altars, nor to temples bound.
In wealth, in want, in freedom, or in chains,
In dungeons or on thrones, the faithful find thee!
E'en in the burning cauldron thou waſt near
To Shadrach and the holy brotherhood:

The unhurt martyrs bleſs'd thee in the flames;
They ſought, and found Thee; call'd, and Thou
waſt there.

FIRST JEW.

How chang'd our ſtate! Judah, thy glory's
fall'n!
Thy joys for hard captivity exchang'd;
And thy ſad ſons breathe the polluted air
Of Babylon, where deities obſcene
Inſult the living God; and to his ſervants,
The prieſts of wretched idols made with hands,
Shew contumelious ſcorn.

DANIEL.

'Tis Heav'n's high will.

SECOND JEW.

If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem!
If I not fondly cheriſh thy lov'd image,
E'en in the giddy hour of thoughtleſs mirth;
If I not rather view thy proſtrate walls

Than

Than haughty Babylon's imperial tow'rs,—
Then may my tongue refuse to frame the strains
Of sweetest harmony; my rude right hand
Forget, with sounds symphonious, to accord
The harp of Jesse's son to Sion's songs.

FIRST JEW.

Oft on Euphrates' ever verdant banks
Where drooping willows form a mournful shade,
With all the pride which prosp'rous fortunes
give,
And all th' unfeeling mirth of happy men,
Th' insulting Babylonians ask a song;
Such songs as erst in better days, were sung
By Korah's sons, or heav'n-taught Asaph set
To loftiest measures; then our bursting hearts
Feel all their woes afresh; the galling chain
Of bondage crushes then the free-born soul
With wringing anguish; from the trembling lip
Th' unfinish'd cadence falls; and the big tear,
While it relieves, betrays the woe-fraught soul.
For who can view Euphrates' pleasant stream,

Its drooping willows, and its verdant banks,
And not to wounded memory recall
The piny groves of fertile Paleſtine,
The vales of Solyma, and Jordan's ſtream!

DANIEL.

Firm faith and deep ſubmiſſion to high Heav'n
Will teach us to endure, without a murmur,
What ſeems ſo hard. Think what the holy hoſt
Of patriarchs, ſaints, and prophets have ſuſtain'd,
In the bleſt cauſe of truth! And ſhall not we,
O men of Judah, dare what theſe have dar'd,
And boldly paſs thro' the refining fire
Of fierce affliction? Yes, be witneſs, Heav'n!
Old as I am, I will not ſhrink at death,
Come in what ſhape it may, if God ſo will,
By peril to confirm and prove my faith.
Oh! I wou'd dare yon den of hungry lions,
Rather than pauſe to fill the taſk aſſign'd
By wiſdom Infinite. Nor think I boaſt,
Not in myſelf, but in thy ſtrength I truſt,
Spirit of God!

FIRST JEW.

Prophet, thy words ſupport,
And raiſe our ſinking ſouls.

DANIEL.

Behold yon palace;
There proud Belſhazzar keeps his wanton court!
I knew it once beneath another lord,
His grandſire *, who ſubdu'd Jehoiachin,
And hither brought ſad Judah's captive tribes;
And with them brought the rich and precious relics
Of our fam'd temple; all the holy treaſure,
The golden vaſes, and the ſacred cups,
Which grac'd, in happier times, the ſanctuary.

SECOND JEW.

May HE, to whoſe bleſt uſe they were devoted,
Preſerve

* Nebuchadnezzar.

Preferve them from pollution; and once more,
In his own gracious time, reftore the temple!

DANIEL.

I, with fome favour'd youths of Jewifh race,
Was lodg'd in the king's palace, and inftructed
In all the various learning of the eaft:
But HE, on whofe great name our fathers call'd,
Preferv'd us from the perils of a court,
Warn'd us to guard our youthful appetites,
And ftill with holy fortitude reject
The pamp'ring viands luxury prefented;
Fell luxury! more perilous to youth
Than ftorms or quickfands, poverty or chains.

SECOND JEW.

He who can guard 'gainft the low baits of fenfe,
Will find Temptation's arrows hurtlefs ftrike
Againft the brazen fhield of Temperance.
For 'tis th' inferior appetites enthrall

The

The man, and quench th' immortal light within
him;
The ſenſes take the ſoul an eaſy prey.
And ſink th' impriſon'd ſpirit into brute.

DANIEL.

Twice *, by the Spirit of God, did I expound
The viſions of the king; his ſoul was touch'd,
And twice did he repent, and proſtrate fall
Before the God of Daniel: yet again,
Pow'r, flatt'ry, and proſperity, undid him.
When from the lofty ramparts of his palace
He view'd the ſplendors of the royal city,
That magazine of wealth, which proud Euphrates
Wafts from each diſtant corner of the earth;
When he beheld the adamantine tow'rs,
The brazen gates, the bulwarks of his ſtrength,
The pendant gardens, Art's ſtupendous work,
The wonder of the world! the proud Chaldean,
Mad with th' intoxicating fumes which riſe

When

* Daniel, chap. ii. and iv.

When uncontroll'd ambition grafps at once
Dominion abfolute and boundlefs wealth,
Forgot he was a man, forgot his God!
"This mighty Babylon is mine," he cry'd;
"*My* wond'rous pow'r, *my* godlike arm atchiev'd it.
"I fcorn fubmiffion; own no Deity
"Above my own." — While the blafphemer fpoke,
The wrath of Heav'n inflicted inftant vengeance:
Stripp'd him of that bright reafon he abus'd,
And drove him from the cheerful haunts of men,
A naked, wretched, helplefs, fenfelefs thing;
Companion of the brutes, his equals now.

FIRST JEW.

Nor does his impious grandfon, proud Belfhazzar,
Fall fhort of his offences; nay, he wants
The valiant fpirit and the active foul
Of his progenitor; for Pleafure's flave,

Though

Though bound in ſilken chains, and only tied
In flowery fetters, ſeeming light and looſe,
Is more ſubdu'd than the raſh caſual victim
Of anger or ambition; theſe indeed
Burn with a fiercer but a ſhort-liv'd fire;
While Pleaſure with a conſtant flame conſumes.
War ſlays her thouſands, but deſtructive Pleaſure,
More fell, more fatal, her ten thouſands ſlays:
The young luxurious king ſhe fondly wooes
In ev'ry ſhape of am'rous blandiſhment;
With adulation ſmooth enſnares his ſoul;
With love betrays him, and with wine inflames.
She ſtrews her magic poppies o'er his couch
And with delicious opiates charms him down,
In fatal ſlumbers bound. Though Babylon
Is now inveſted by the warlike troops
Of royal Cyrus, Perſia's valiant prince;
Who, in conjunction with the Median king,
Darius, fam'd for conqueſt, now prepares
To ſtorm the city: not th' impending horrors
Which ever wait a ſiege have pow'r to wake
To thought or ſenſe th' intoxicated king.

DANIEL.

E'en in this night of univerſal dread,
A mighty army threat'ning at the gates;
This very night, as if in ſcorn of danger,
The diſſolute Belſhazzar holds a feaſt
Magnificently impious, meant to honour
Belus, the fav'rite Babyloniſh idol.
Lewd paraſites compoſe his wanton court,
Whoſe impious flatt'ries ſoothe his monſtrous crimes:
They juſtify his vices, and extol
His boaſtful phraſe, as if he were ſome god.
Whate'er he ſays, they ſay; what he commands,
Implicitly they do; they echo back
His blaſphemies with ſhouts of loud acclaim;
And when he wounds the tortur'd ear of Virtue,
They cry "All hail! Belſhazzar live for ever!"
To-night a thouſand nobles fill his hall,
Princes, and all the dames who grace the court;
All but his virtuous mother, ſage Nitocris:
Ah! how unlike the impious king her ſon!

She

She never mingles in the midnight fray,
Nor crowns the guilty banquet with her presence.
The royal fair is rich in ev'ry virtue
Which can adorn the queen or grace the woman.
But for the wisdom of her prudent counsels
This wretched empire had been long undone.
Not fam'd Semiramis, Assyria's pride,
Cou'd boast a brighter mind or firmer soul;
Beneath the gentle reign of Merodach *,
Her royal lord, our nation tasted peace.
Our captive monarch, sad Jehoiachin,
Grown grey in a close prison's horrid gloom,
He freed from bondage; brought the hoary king
To taste once more the long-forgotten sweets
Of liberty and light, sustain'd his age,
Pour'd in his wounds the lenient balm of kind-
nefs,
And blest his setting hour of life with peace.

[*Sound of trumpets is heard at a distance.*

FIRST JEW.

That sound proclaims the banquet is begun.

SECOND

* 2 Kings, chap. xxv.

SECOND JEW.

Hark! the licentious uproar grows more loud
The vaulted roof resounds with shouts of mirth,
And the firm palace shakes! Retire my friends;
This madness is not meet for sober ears.
If any of our race were found so near,
'Twould but expose us to the rude attack
Of ribaldry obscene and impious jests
From these mad sons of Belial, more inflam'd
To deeds of riot by the wanton feast.

DANIEL.

Here part we then! but when again to meet
Who knows save Heav'n? Yet, O my friends!
I feel
An impulse more than human stir my breast.
Rapt in prophetic vision *, I behold
Things hid as yet from mortal sight. I see
The dart of vengeance tremble in the air,
Ere long to pierce the impious king. E'en now
The

* See the prophecies of Isaiah, chap. xlvii. and others.

The defolating angel ftalks abroad,
And brandifhes aloft the two-edg'd fword
Of retribution keen; he foon will ftrike,
And Babylon fhall weep as Sion wept.
Pafs but a little while, and you fhall fee
This queen of cities proftrate on the earth.
This haughty miftrefs of the kneeling world,
How fhall fhe fit difhonour'd in the duft,
In tarnifh'd pomp and folitary woe!
How fhall fhe fhrowd her glories in the dark,
And in opprobrious filence hide her head!
Lament, O virgin daughter of Chaldea!
For thou fhalt fall! imperial queen, fhalt fall!
No more Sidonian robes fhall grace thy limbs.
To purple garments fackcloth fhall fucceed;
And fordid duft and afhes fhall fupply
The od'rous nard and caffia. Thou, who faid'ft
I AM, and there is none befide me: thou,
E'en thou, imperial Babylon, fhalt fall!
Thy glory quite eclips'd! The pleafant found
Of viol and of harp fhall charm no more;
Nor fong of Syrian damfels fhall be heard,

Refponfive

Refponfive to the lute's luxurious note :
But the loud bittern's cry, the raven's croak,
The bat's fell fcream, the lonely owl's dull plaint,
And ev'ry hideous bird, with ominous fhriek,
Shall fcare affrighted Silence from thy walls :
While Defolation, fnatching from the hand
Of Time the fcythe of ruin, fits aloft,
Or ftalks in dreadful majefty abroad.
I fee th' exterminating fiend advance,
Ev'n now I fee her glare with horrid joy,
See towers imperial mould'ring at her touch ;
She glances on the broken battlement,
She eyes the crumbling column, and enjoys
The work of ages proftrate in the duft —
Then, pointing to the mifchiefs fhe has made,
Exulting cries, This once was Babylon !

BELSHAZZAR.

PART II.

Scene—the Court of Belſhazzar. The King ſeated on a magnificent Throne. Princes, Nobles, and Attendants. Ladies of the Court. Muſic — A ſuperb Banquet.

FIRST COURTIER (*riſes and kneels*).

Hail, mighty king!

SECOND COURTIER.

Belſhazzar, live for ever!

THIRD COURTIER.

Sun of the world, and light of kings, all hail!

FOURTH COURTIER.

With lowly rev'rence, ſuch as beſt becomes
The humbleſt creatures of imperial power,

Behold

Behold a thouſand nobles bend before thee!
Princes far fam'd, and dames of high deſcent:
Yet all this pride of wealth, this boaſt of beauty,
Shrinks into nought before thine awful eye!
And lives or dies as the king frowns or ſmiles!

BELSHAZZAR.

This is ſuch homage as becomes your love,
And ſuits the mighty monarch of mankind.

FIFTH COURTIER.

The bending world ſhou'd proſtrate thus before
thee;
And pay not only praiſe but adoration!

BELSHAZZAR (*riſes and comes forward*).

Let dull philoſophy preach ſelf-denial;
Let envious poverty and ſnarling age
Proudly declaim againſt the joys they know not.
Let the deluded Jews, who fondly hope
Some fancied heav'n hereafter, mortify,
And loſe the actual bleſſings of this world

To purchaſe others which may never come.
Our Gods may promiſe leſs, but give us more.
Ill cou'd my ardent ſpirit be content
With meagre abſtinence and hungry hope.
Let thoſe misjudging Iſraelites, who want
The nimble ſpirits and the active ſoul,
Call their blunt feelings virtue: let them drudge,
In regular progreſſion, thro' the round
Of formal duty and of daily toil;
And, when they want the genius to be happy,
Believe their harſh auſterity is goodneſs.
If there be gods, they meant we ſhou'd enjoy:
Why give us elſe theſe taſtes and appetites?
And why the means to crown them with indulgence?
To burſt the feeble bonds which hold the vulgar,
Is noble daring.

FIRST COURTIER.

And is therefore worthy
The high imperial ſpirit of Belſhazzar.

SECOND COURTIER.

Behold a banquet, which the gods might ſhare!

BELSHAZZAR.

To-night, my friends, your monarch ſhall be bleſt
With ev'ry various joy; to-night is ours;
Nor ſhall the envious gods, who view our bliſs
And ſicken as they view, to-night diſturb us.
Bring all the richeſt ſpices of the Eaſt;
The od'rous caſſia and the drooping myrrh,
The liquid amber and the fragrant gums,
Rob Gilead of its balms, Belſhazzar bids.
And leave th' Arabian groves without an odour.
Bring freſheſt flow'rs, exhauſt the blooming ſpring,
Twine the green myrtle with the ſhort-liv'd roſe;
And ever, as the bluſhing garland fades,
We'll learn to ſnatch the fugitive delight,

And grafp the flying joy ere it efcape us.
Come — fill the fmiling goblet for the king;
Belfhazzar will not let a moment pafs
Unmark'd by fome enjoyment! The full bowl
Let every gueft partake!

[*Courtiers kneel and drink.*

FIRST COURTIER.

Here's to the king!
Light of the world, and Glory of the earth,
Whofe word is fate!

BELSHAZZAR.

Yes; we are likeft gods
When we have pow'r, and ufe it. What is wealth
But the rich means to gratify defire?
I will not have a wifh, a hope, a thought,
That fhall not know fruition. What is empire?
The privilege to punifh and enjoy;
To feel our pow'r in making others fear it;
To tafte of Pleafure's cup till we grow giddy,
And think ourfelves immortal! This is empire!
My anceftors fcarce tafted of its joys:

Shut from the fprightly world, and all its charms,
In cumbrous majefty, in fullen ftate
And dull unfocial dignity they liv'd;
Far from the fight of an admiring world,
That world, whofe gaze makes half the charms
of greatnefs;
They nothing knew of empire but the name,
Or faw it in the looks of trembling flaves;
And all they felt of royalty was care.
But I will fee, and know it of myfelf;
Youth, Wealth, and Greatnefs court me to be
bleft,
And Pow'r and Pleafure draw with equal force
And fweet attraction: both I will embrace
In quick fucceffion; this is Pleafure's day;
Ambition will have time to reign hereafter;
It is the proper appetite of age.
The luft of pow'r fhall lord it uncontroll'd,
When all the gen'rous feelings grow obtufe,
And ftern dominion holds, with rigid hand,
His iron rein, and fits and fways alone.
But youth is Pleafure's hour!

FIRST COURTIER.

Perifh the flave
Who, with officious counfel wou'd oppofe
The king's defire, whofe flighteft wifh is law!

BELSHAZZAR.

Now ftrike the loud-ton'd lyre and fofter lute;
Let me have mufic, with the nobler aid
Of poefy. Where are thofe cunning men
Who boaft, by chofen founds, and meafur'd fweetnefs,
To fet the bufy fpirits in a flame,
And cool them at their will? who know the art
To call the hidden pow'rs of numbers forth,
And make that pliant inftrument, the mind,
Yield to the pow'rful fympathy of found,
Obedient to the mafter's artful hand?
Such magic is in fong! Then give me fong;
Yet not at firft fuch foul-diffolving ftrains
As melt the soften'd fenfe; but fuch bold meafures
As may inflame my fpirit to defpife
Th' ambitious Perfian, that prefumptuous boy,

Who raſhly dares e'en now inveſt our city,
And menaces th' invincible Belſhazzar.

[*A grand Concert of Muſic, after which an Ode.*]

In vain ſhall Perſian Cyrus dare
With great Belſhazzar wage unequal war:
In vain Darius ſhall combine,
Darius, leader of the Median line;
While fair Euphrates' ſtream our walls protects,
And great Belſhazzar's ſelf our fate directs.
War and famine threat in vain,
While this demi-god ſhall reign!
Let Perſia's proſtrate king confeſs his pow'r,
And Media's monarch dread his vengeful hour.
On Dura's * ample plain behold
Immortal Belus †, whom the nations own;
Sublime

* Daniel, chap. iii.

† See a very fine deſcription of the Temple of this idol.
——— The tow'ring fane
Of Bel, Chaldean Jove, ſurpaſſing far
That Doric Temple, which the Elean chiefs
Rais'd to their thunderer from the ſpoils of war;

Or

Sublime he ſtands in burniſh'd gold,
And richeſt offerings his bright altars crown.
To-night his deity we here adore,
And due libations ſpeak his mighty pow'r.
Yet Belus' ſelf not more we own
Than great Belſhazzar on Chaldea's throne.
Great Belſhazzar like a god,
Rules the nations with a nod!
To great Belſhazzar be the goblet crown'd!
Belſhazzar's name the echoing roofs rebound!

BELSHAZZAR.

Enough! the kindling rapture fires my brain,
And my heart dances to the flatt'ring ſounds.
I feel myſelf a god! Why not a god?
What were the deities our fathers worſhipp'd?
What was great Nimrod our Imperial founder?
What greater Belus, to whoſe pow'r divine
We

Or that Ionic, where th' Epheſian bow'd
To Dian, queen of heaven. Eight towers ariſe,
Each above each, immeaſureable height,
A monument at once of Eaſtern pride,
And ſlaviſh ſuperſtition, &c. *Judah Reſtored*, b. i.

We raiſe to-night the banquet and the ſong;
But youthful heroes, mortal, like myſelf,
Who by their daring earn'd divinity?
They were but men: nay, ſome were leſs than
men,
Tho' now rever'd as gods. What was Anubis,
Whom Egypt's ſapient ſons adore? A dog!
And ſhall not I, young, valiant, and a king,
Dare more? do more? exceed the boldeſt flights
Of my progenitors? — Fill me more wine,
To cheriſh and exalt the young idea! (*he drinks.*)
Ne'er did Olympian Jupiter himſelf
Quaff ſuch immortal draughts.

FIRST COURTIER.

What cou'd that Canaan,
That heaven in hope, that nothing in poſſeſſion,
That air-built bliſs of the deluded Jews,
That promis'd land of milk and flowing honey;
What cou'd that fancy'd Paradiſe beſtow
To match theſe generous juices?

BELSHAZZAR.

BELSHAZZAR.

Hold — enough!
Thou haſt rous'd a thought. By Heav'n, I will
enjoy it:
A glorious thought! which will exalt to rapture
The pleaſures of the banquet, and beſtow
A yet untaſted reliſh of delight.

FIRST COURTIER.

What means the king?

BELSHAZZAR.

The Jews! ſaidſt thou the Jews?

FIRST COURTIER.

I ſpoke of that undone, that outcaſt people,
Thoſe tributary creatures of thy pow'r,
The captives of thy will, whoſe very breath
Hangs on the ſovereign pleaſure of the king.

BELSHAZZAR.

When that abandon'd race was hither brought,
Were not the choiceſt treaſures of their temple,
(Devoted to their God, and held moſt precious,)

Among the ſpoils which grac'd Nebaſſar's * triumph,
And lodg'd in Babylon?

FIRST COURTIER.

O king! they were.

SECOND COURTIER.

The Jews, with ſuperſtitious awe, behold
Theſe ſacred ſymbols of their ancient faith:
Nor has captivity abated aught
The rev'rend love they bear theſe holy reliques.
Tho' we deride their law, and ſcorn their perſons,
Yet never have we yet to human uſe
Devoted theſe rich veſſels ſet apart
To ſacred purpoſes.

BELSHAZZAR.

I joy to hear it!
Go — fetch them hither. They ſhall grace our banquet.
Does no one ſtir? Belſhazzar diſobey'd?

And

* The name of Nebuchadnezzar not being reducible to verſe, I have adopted that of Nebaſſar, on the authority of the ingenious and learned Author of *Judah Reſtored.*

And yet you live? Whence comes this ſtrange
reluctance?
This new-born rev'rence for the helpleſs Jews?
This fear to injure thoſe who can't revenge it?
Send to the ſacred treaſury in haſte,
Let all be hither brought; — who anſwers dies.

[*They go out.*

The mantling wine a higher joy will yield,
Pour'd from the precious flaggons which adorn'd
Their far-fam'd temple, now in aſhes laid.
Oh! 'twill exalt the pleaſure into tranſport,
To gall thoſe whining, praying Iſraelites!
I laugh to think what wild diſmay will ſeize them
When they ſhall learn the uſe that has been made
Of all their holy trumpery!

[*The veſſels are brought in.*

SECOND COURTIER.

It comes;
A goodly ſhew! how bright with gold and gems!
Far fitter for a youthful monarch's board
Than the cold ſhrine of an unheeding God.

BELSHAZZAR.

BELSHAZZAR.

Fill me that maſſy goblet to the brim.
Now, Abraham! let thy wretched race expect
The fable of their faith to be fulfill'd;
Their ſecond temple, and their promis'd king!
Now will they ſee the God they vainly ſerve
Is impotent to help; for had he pow'r
To hear and grant their pray'r, he wou'd prevent
This profanation.

[*As the king is going to drink, thunder is heard; he ſtarts from the throne, ſpies a hand, which writes on the wall theſe words,* MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN. *He lets fall the goblet, and ſtands in an attitude of ſpeechleſs horror. All ſtart and ſeem terrified.*

FIRST COURTIER (*after a long pauſe*).

Oh, tranſcendent horror!

SECOND COURTIER.

What may this mean? The king is greatly mov'd!

THIRD

THIRD COURTIER.

Nor is it ſtrange — who unappall'd can view it?
Thoſe ſacred cups! I doubt we've gone too far!

FIRST COURTIER.

Obſerve the fear-ſtruck king! his ſtarting eyes
Roll horribly. Thrice he eſſay'd to ſpeak,
And thrice his tongue refus'd.

BELSHAZZAR (*in a low trembling voice*).

Ye myſtic words!
Thou ſemblance of an hand! illuſive forms!
Ye wild fantaſtic images, what are ye?
Dread ſhadows, ſpeak! Explain your dark intent!
Ye will not anſwer me — Alas! I feel
I am a mortal now — My failing limbs
Refuſe to bear me up. I am no god!
Gods do not tremble thus — Support me, hold me:
Theſe looſen'd joints, theſe knees which ſmite each other,
Betray I'm but a man — a weak one too!

FIRST COURTIER.

In truth, 'tis paffing ftrange, and full of horror!

BELSHAZZAR.

Send for the learn'd magicians, every fage
Who deals in wizard fpells and magic charms.
[*Some go out.*

FIRST COURTIER.

How fares my lord the king?

BELSHAZZAR.

Am I a king?
What pow'r have I? Ye lying flaves, I am not.
Oh, foul-diftracting fight! but is it real?
Perhaps 'tis fancy all, or the wild dream
Of mad diftemperature, the fumes of wine!
I'll look upon't no more! — So — now I'm well!
I am a king again, and know not fear.
And yet my eyes will feek that fatal fpot,
And fondly dwell upon the fight that blafts them!
Again, 'tis there! it is not fancy's work,
I fee it ftill! 'tis written on the wall!
I fee the writing, but the viewlefs writer,

Who! what is he? Oh, horror! horror! horror!
It cannot be the God of theſe poor Jews;
For what is He, that he can thus afflict?

SECOND COURTIER.

Let not my lord the king be thus diſmay'd.

THIRD COURTIER.

Let not a phantom, an illuſive ſhade,
Diſturb the peace of him who rules the world.

BELSHAZZAR.

No more, ye wretched ſycophants! no more!
The ſweeteſt note which flatt'ry now can ſtrike,
Harſh and diſcordant grates upon my ſoul.
Talk not of pow'r to one ſo full of fear,
So weak, ſo impotent! Look on that wall;
If thou wou'dſt ſooth my ſoul explain the writing,
And thou ſhalt be my oracle, my God!
O tell me whence it came, and what it means,
And I'll believe I am again a king!
Friends! Princes! eaſe my troubled breaſt, and ſay
What do the myſtic characters portend?

FIRST COURTIER.

'Tis not in us, O king, to eafe thy fpirit;
We are not fkill'd in thofe myfterious arts
Which wait the midnight ftudies of the fage:
But of the deep diviners thou fhalt learn,
The wife aftrologers, the fage magicians,
Who, of events unborn, take fecret note,
And hold deep commerce wiih the unfeen world.

Enter Aftrologers, Magicians, &c. &c.

BELSHAZZAR.

Approach, ye fages, 'tis the king commands!
[*They kneel.*

ASTROLOGERS.

Hail, mighty king of Babylon!

BELSHAZZAR.

Nay, rife:
I do not need your homage, but your help;
The world may worfhip, you muft counfel me.
He who declares the fecret of the king,
No common honours fhall await his fkill;
Our

Our empire ſhall be tax'd for his reward,
And he himſelf ſhall name the gift he wiſhes.
A ſplendid ſcarlet robe ſhall grace his limbs,
His neck a princely chain of gold adorn:
Meet honours for ſuch wiſdom: He ſhall rule
The third in rank throughout our Babylon.

SECOND ASTROLOGER.

Such recompence becomes Belſhazzar's bounty.
Let the king ſpeak the ſecret of his ſoul;
Which heard, his humble creatures ſhall unfold.

BELSHAZZAR (*points to the wall.*)

Be 't ſo—look there—behold thoſe characters!
Nay, do not ſtart, for I will know their meaning!
Ha! anſwer; ſpeak, or inſtant death awaits you!
What, dumb! all dumb! where is your boaſted ſkill? [*They confer together.*
Keep them aſunder — no confederacy ——
No ſecret plots to make your tales agree.
Speak, ſlaves, and dare to let me know the worſt! [*They kneel.*

FIRST ASTROLOGER.

O, let the king forgive his faithful ſervants!

SECOND

SECOND ASTROLOGER.

O mitigate our threaten'd doom of death;
If we declare, with mingled grief and ſhame;
We cannot tell the ſecret of the king,
Nor what theſe myſtic characters portend!

BELSHAZZAR.

Off with their heads! Ye ſhall not live an hour!
Curſe on your ſhallow arts, your lying ſcience!
'Tis thus you practiſe on the credulous world,
Who think you wiſe becauſe themſelves are weak!
But, miſcreants, ye ſhall die! the pow'r to puniſh
Is all that I have left me of a king.

FIRST COURTIER.

Great Sire, ſuſpend their puniſhment a while.
Behold Nitocris comes, thy royal mother!

Enter QUEEN.

QUEEN.

O my miſguided ſon!
Well may'ſt thou wonder to behold me here:
For I have ever ſhunn'd this ſcene of riot,
Where wild intemperance and diſhonour'd mirth

Hold feſtival impure. Yet, O Belſhazzar!
I could not hear the wonders which befel,
And leave thee to the workings of deſpair:
For, ſpite of all the anguiſh of my ſoul
At thy offences, I 'm thy mother ſtill!
Againſt the ſolemn purpoſe I had form'd
Never to mix in this unhallow'd crowd,
The wond'rous ſtory of the myſtic writing,
Of ſtrange and awful import, brings me here;
If happ'ly I may ſhew ſome likely means
To fathom this dark myſtery.

BELSHAZZAR.

Speak, O queen!
My liſt'ning ſoul ſhall hang upon thy words,
And prompt obedience follow them!

QUEEN.

Then hear me.
Among the captive tribes which hither came
To grace Nebaſſar's triumph, there was brought
A youth nam'd Daniel, favour'd by high Heav'n

With pow'r to look into the ſecret page
Of dim Futurity's myſterious volume.
The ſpirit of the holy gods is in him;
No viſion ſo obſcure, ſo deeply hid,
No ſentence ſo perplex'd, but he can ſolve it:
He can unfold the dark decrees of fate,
Can trace each crooked labyrinth of thought,
Each winding maze of doubt, and make it clear
And palpable to ſenſe. He twice explain'd
The monarch's myſtic dreams. The holy ſeer
Saw, with prophetic ſpirit, what befel
The king long after. For his wond'rous ſkill
He was rewarded, honour'd, and careſs'd,
And with the rulers of Chaldea rank'd:
Tho' now, alas! thrown by, his ſervices
Forgotten or neglected.

BELSHAZZAR.

Send with ſpeed
A meſſage, to command the holy man
To meet us on the inſtant.

NITOCRIS.

NITOCRIS.

I already
Have ſent to aſk his preſence at the palace;
And, lo! in happy ſeaſon, ſee he comes.

Enter DANIEL.

BELSHAZZAR.

Welcome, thrice venerable ſage! approach.
Art thou that Daniel whom my great forefather
Brought hither with the captive tribes of Judah?

DANIEL.

I am, O King!

BELSHAZZAR.

Then, pardon, holy prophet;
Nor let a juſt reſentment of thy wrongs,
And long neglected merit, ſhut thy heart
Againſt a king's requeſt, a ſuppliant king!

DANIEL.

The God I worſhip teaches to forgive.

BELSHAZZAR.

Then let thy words bring comfort to my ſoul.

I've heard the ſpirit of the gods is in thee;
That thou can'ſt look into the fates of men,
With preſcience more than human!

DANIEL.

Hold, O king!
Wiſdom is from above; 'tis God's own gift;
I of myſelf am nothing; but from Him
The little knowledge I poſſeſs, I hold:
To him be all the glory!

BELSHAZZAR.

Then, O Daniel!
If thou indeed doſt boaſt that wond'rous gift,
That faculty divine; look there, and tell me!
O ſay, what mean thoſe myſtic characters?
Remove this load of terror from my ſoul,
And honours, ſuch as kings can give, await thee.
Thou ſhalt be great beyond thy ſoul's ambition,
And rich above thy wildeſt dream of wealth:
Clad in the ſcarlet robe our nobles wear,
And grac'd with princely enſigns, thou ſhalt ſtand
Near our own throne, and third within our empire.

DANIEL.

O mighty king, thy gifts with thee remain,
And let thy high rewards on others fall.
The princely enfign, nor the fcarlet robe,
Nor yet to be the third within thy realm,
Can touch the foul of Daniel. Honour, fame,
All that the world calls great, thy crown itfelf,
Cou'd never fatisfy the vaft ambition
Of an immortal fpirit; I afpire
Beyond thy pow'r of giving; my high hopes
Reach alfo to a crown — but 'tis a crown
Unfading and eternal. ———

FIRST COURTIER.

Wond'rous man!
Our priefts teach no fuch notions.

DANIEL.

Yet, O king!
Tho' all unmov'd by grandeur or by gift,
I will unfold the high decrees of Heav'n,
And ftrait declare the myftery.

BELSHAZZAR.

Speak, O Prophet!

DANIEL.

Prepare to hear what kings have feldom heard;
Prepare to hear what courtiers feldom tell;
Prepare to hear, the Truth. The mighty God,
Who rules the fceptres and the hearts of kings,
Gave thy renown'd forefather * here to reign,
With fuch extent of empire, weight of pow'r,
And greatnefs of dominion, the wide earth
Trembled beneath the terror of his name,
And kingdoms ftood or fell as he decreed.
Oh! dangerous pinnacle of pow'r fupreme!
Who can ftand fafe upon its treach'rous top,
Behold the gazing proftrate world below,
Whom depth and diftance into pigmies fhrink,
And not grow giddy? Babylon's great king
Forgot he was a man, a helplefs man,
Subject to pain, and fin, and death, like others!
But who fhall fight againft Omnipotence?

Or

* Nebuchadnezzar.

Or who hath harden'd his obdurate heart
Againſt the Majeſty of Heav'n, and proſper'd?
The God he had inſulted was aveng'd;
From empire, from the joys of ſocial life,
He drove him forth; extinguiſh'd reaſon's lamp;
Quench'd that bright ſpark of deity within;
Compell'd him with the foreſt brutes to roam
For ſcanty paſture; and the mountain dews
Fell, cold and wet, on his defenceleſs head,
Till he confeſs'd — Let men, let monarchs hear!
Till he confeſs'd, PRIDE WAS NOT MADE FOR MAN!

NITOCRIS.

O, awful inſtance of divine diſpleaſure!

BELSHAZZAR.

Proceed! my ſoul is wrapt in fix'd attention!

DANIEL.

O king! thy grandſire not in vain had ſinn'd,
If, from his error, thou hadſt learnt the truth.
The ſtory of his fall thou oft haſt heard,
But has it taught thee wiſdom? Thou, like him,

Haſt been elate with pow'r, and mad with pride.
Like him, thou haſt defy'd the living God.
Nay, to bold thoughts haſt added deeds more bold.
Thou haſt outwrought the pattern he bequeath'd
thee,
And quite outgone example; haſt prophan'd,
With impious hand, the veſſels of the Temple:
Thoſe veſſels, ſanctify'd to holieſt uſe,
Thou haſt polluted with unhallow'd lips,
And made the inſtruments of foul debauch.
Thou haſt ador'd the gods of wood and ſtone,
Vile, ſenſeleſs deities, the work of hands,
But HE, THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF
LORDS,
In whom exiſts thy life, thy ſoul, thy breath,
On whom thy being hangs, thou haſt deny'd.

FIRST COURTIER (*aſide to the others*).

With what an holy boldneſs he reproves him!

SECOND COURTIER.

Such is the fearleſs confidence of virtue!
And ſuch the righteous courage thoſe maintain
Who

Who plead the cause of truth! The smallest
word
He utters had been death to half the court.

BELSHAZZAR.

Now let the mystic writing be explain'd,
Thrice venerable sage!

DANIEL.

O mighty king!
Hear then its awful import: *Heav'n has number'd*
Thy days of royalty, and *soon will end them.*
Our God has weigh'd thee in the even balance
Of his own holy law, and *finds thee wanting:*
And last, *thy kingdom shall be wrested from thee;*
And know, *the Mede and Persian shall possess it.*

BELSHAZZAR (*starts up*).

Prophet, when shall this be?

DANIEL.

In God's own time:
Here my commission ends; I may not utter

More

More than thou'ſt heard; but O! remember,
king!
Thy days are number'd: hear, repent, and live!

BELSHAZZAR.

Say, Prophet, what can penitence avail?
If Heav'n's decrees immutably are fix'd,
Can pray'rs avert our fate?

DANIEL.

They change our hearts,
And thus diſpoſe Omnipotence to mercy.
'Tis man that alters; God is ſtill the ſame.
Conditional are all Heav'n's covenants:
And when th' uplifted thunder is withheld,
'Tis pray'r that deprecates th' impending bolt.
Good Hezekiah's * days were number'd too;
But penitence and faith were mighty pleas:
At Mercy's throne they never plead in vain.
[*He is going.*

BELSHAZZAR.

Stay, Prophet, and receive thy promis'd gift;
The

* 2 Chron. chap. xxxiii. Iſaiah, chap. xxxviii.

The ſcarlet robe and princely chain are thine:
And let my heralds publiſh through the land
That Daniel ſtands, in dignity and pow'r,
The third in Babylon. Theſe juſt rewards
Thou well may'ſt claim, tho' ſad thy prophecy!

QUEEN.

Be not deceiv'd, my ſon! nor let thy ſoul
Snatch an uncertain moment's treach'rous reſt,
On the dread brink of that tremendous gulf
Which yawns beneath thee.

DANIEL.

O unhappy king!
Know what *muſt* happen once *may* happen ſoon.
Remember that 'tis terrible to meet
Great evils unprepar'd! and, O Belſhazzar!
In the wild moment of diſmay and death,
Remember thou waſt warn'd! and, O remember,
Warnings deſpis'd are condemnations then!

[*Exeunt* DANIEL *and* QUEEN.

BELSHAZZAR.

'Tis well — my ſoul ſhakes off its load of care:

'Tis only the obſcure is terrible.
Imagination frames events unknown,
In wild fantaſtic ſhapes of hideous ruin;
And what it fears, creates! — I know the worſt;
And awful is that worſt as fear could feign:
But diſtant are the ills I have to dread!
What is remote may be uncertain too!—
Ha! Princes! hope breaks in! — This may not be.

FIRST COURTIER.

Perhaps this Daniel is in league with Perſia;
And brib'd by Cyrus to report theſe horrors,
To weaken and impede the mighty plans
Of thy imperial mind!

BELSHAZZAR.

'Tis very like.

SECOND COURTIER.

Return we to the banquet.

BELSHAZZAR.

Dare we venture?

THIRD

THIRD COURTIER.

Let not this dreaming ſeer diſturb the king.
Againſt the pow'r of Cyrus and the Mede,
Is Babylon ſecure. Her brazen gates
Mock all attempts to force them. Proud Euphrates,
A wat'ry bulwark, guards our ample city
From all aſſailants. And within the walls
Of this ſtupendous capital are lodg'd
Such vaſt proviſions, ſuch exhauſtleſs ſtores,
As a twice ten years ſiege could never waſte!

BELSHAZZAR (*embraces him*).

My better genius! Safe in ſuch reſources,
I mock the Prophet. — Turn we to the banquet!

[*As they are going to reſume their places at the banquet, a dreadful uproar is heard, tumltuqus cries, and warlike ſounds. All ſtand terrified. Enter ſoldiers, with their ſwords drawn, and wounded.*

SOLDIER.

Oh, helpleſs Babylon! Oh, wretched king!
Chaldea is no more, the Mede has conquer'd!

The

The victor Cyrus, like a mighty torrent,
Comes rushing on, and marks his way with ruin!
Destruction is at hand; escape or perish.

BELSHAZZAR.

Impossible! Villain and slave, thou ly'st!
Euphrates and the brazen gates secure us.
While those remain, Belshazzar laughs at danger.

SOLDIER.

Euphrates is diverted from its course;
The brazen gates are burst, the city's taken,
Thyself a pris'ner, and thy empire lost.

BELSHAZZAR.

Oh, Prophet! I remember thee indeed!
[*He runs out. They follow in the utmost confusion.*

Enter several Jews, Medes, and Babylonians.

FIRST JEW.

He comes, he comes! the long predicted prince,
Cyrus! the destin'd instrument of Heav'n,
To free our captive nation, and restore

JEHOVAH'S

Jehovah's Temple. Carnage marks his way,
And conqueſt ſits upon his plume-crown'd helm!

SECOND JEW.

What noiſe is that?

FIRST JEW.

Hark! 'tis Belſhazzar's voice!

BELSHAZZAR (*without*).

O ſoldier, ſpare my life, and aid my flight!
Such treaſures ſhall reward the gentle deed
As Perſia never ſaw. I'll be thy ſlave;
I'll yield my crown to Cyrus; I'll adore
His gods and thine — I'll kneel and kiſs thy feet,
And worſhip thee. — It is not much I aſk —
I'll live in bondage, beggary, and pain,
So thou but let me live.

SOLDIER.

Die, tyrant, die!

BELSHAZZAR.

O Daniel! Daniel! Daniel!

Enter SOLDIER.

SOLDIER.

Belſhazzar's dead!

The wretched king breath'd out his furious ſoul
In that tremendous groan.

FIRST JEW.

Belſhazzar's dead!

Then, Judah, art thou free! The tyrant's fall'n!
Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem is free!

BELSHAZZAR.

PART III.

Enter DANIEL *and* JEWS.

DANIEL.

BEL boweth down *, and haughty Nebo ſtoops!
The idols fall; the god and worſhipper
Together fall! together they bow down!
Each other, or themſelves they cannot ſave.
O, Babylon, where is thy refuge now?
Thy wiſdom and thy knowledge, meant to ſave,
Pervert thee; and thy bleſſing is thy bane!
Where are thy brutiſh deities, Chaldea?
Where are thy gods of gold?—Oh, Lord of
life!
Thou very God! ſo fall thy foes before thee!

FIRST

* Iſaiah, chap. xlvi.

FIRST JEW.

So fell beneath the terrors of Thy name
The idol Chemoſh, Moab's empty truſt;
So Ammonitiſh Moloch ſunk before Thee;
So fell Philiſtine Dagon: ſo ſhall fall,
To time's remoteſt period, all thy foes,
Triumphant Lord of Hoſts!

DANIEL.

How chang'd our fate!
Not for myſelf, O Judah! but for thee,
I ſhed theſe tears of joy. For I no more
Muſt view the cedars which adorn the brow
Of Syrian Lebanon; no more ſhall ſee
Thy pleaſant ſtream, O Jordan! nor the flocks
Which whiten all the mountains of Judea;
No more theſe eyes delighted ſhall review
Or Carmel's heights, or Sharon's flow'ry vales.
I muſt remain in Babylon! So Heav'n,
To whoſe awards I bow me, has decreed.
I ne'er ſhall ſee thee, Salem! I am old;
And few and toilſome are my days to come.

But

But we ſhall meet in thoſe celeſtial climes,
Compar'd with which created glories ſink;
Where ſinners ſhall have pow'r to harm no more,
And martyr'd Virtue reſts her weary head.
Tho' ere my day of promis'd grace ſhall come,
I ſhall be try'd by perils ſtrange and new;
Nor ſhall I taſte of death, ſo have I learn'd,
Till I have ſeen the captive tribes reſtor'd.

FIRST JEW.

And ſhall we view, once more, thy hallow'd towers,
Imperial Salem?

DANIEL.

Yes, my youthful friends!
You ſhall behold the ſecond temple riſe *,
With grateful ecſtaſy: but we, your ſires,
Now bent with hoary age; we, whoſe charm'd eyes

Beheld

* Ezra, chap. i.

Beheld the matchlefs glories of the firft,
Shou'd weep, rememb'ring what we once had feen,
That model of perfection!

SECOND JEW.

Never more
Shall fuch a wond'rous ftructure grace the earth!

DANIEL.

Well have you borne affliction, men of Judah!
Well have fuftain'd your portion of diftrefs:
And, unrepining, drank the bitter dregs
Of adverfe fortune! Happier days await you.
O guard againft the perils of fuccefs!
Profperity diffolves the yielding foul,
And the bright fun of fhining fortune melts
The firmeft virtue down. Beware, my friends,
Be greatly cautious of profperity!
Defend your fliding hearts; and, trembling, think
How thofe, who buffeted affliction's waves
With vig'rous virtue, funk in pleafure's calm.
He *, who of fpecial grace had been allow'd
To

* Solomon.

To rear the hallow'd fane to Ifrael's God,
By wealth corrupted, and by eafe debauch'd,
Forfook the God to whom he rais'd the fane;
And, funk in fenfual floth, confum'd his days
In vile idolatrous rites! — Nor think, my fons,
That virtue in fequefter'd *folitude*
Is always found. Within the inmoft foul
The hidden tempter lurks; nor lefs betrays
In the ftill feeming fafety of retreat,
Than where the world her fnares entangling fpreads,
More vifible to fenfe. Guard every thought:
Who thinks himfelf fecure is half undone;
For fin, unwatch'd, may reach the fanctuary:
'Tis not the place preferves us. Righteous Lot
Stem'd the ftrong current of corruption's tide,
E'en in polluted Sodom; fafe he liv'd,
While circumfpective Virtue's watchful eye
Was anxioufly awake: but in the fhade,
Far from the obvious perils which alarm
With palpable temptation, fecret fin
Enfnar'd his foul; he trufted in himfelf;
Security betray'd him, and he fell.

SECOND JEW.

Thy prudent counſels in our hearts ſhall live,
As if a pen of adamant had grav'd them.

FIRST JEW.

The dawn approaches; let us part, my friend,
Secure of peace, ſince tyranny is fall'n!

DANIEL.

So periſh all thine enemies, O Lord!
So, mighty God, ſhall periſh all who ſeek
Corrupted pleaſures in the turbid waves
Of life's polluted ſtream, and madly quit
The living fountain of perennial grace!

DANIEL.

A

SACRED DRAMA.

The Righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the Wicked cometh in his ſtead. PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

On peut des plus grands rois ſurprendre la juſtice.
Incapable de tromper,
Ils ont peine a s'echapper
Des pieges de l'artifice.
Un cœur noble ne peut ſoupconner en autrui
La baſſeſſe et la malice
Qu'il ne ſent point en lui.
ESTHER. TRAGEDIE de RACINE.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

DARIUS, King of Media and Babylon.

PHARNACES, } Courtiers, enemies to Daniel.
SORANUS, }

ARASPES, a young Median Lord, friend and convert to Daniel.

DANIEL.

Scene—The City of Babylon.

The Subject is taken from the Sixth Chapter of the Prophet Daniel.

DANIEL.

PART I.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

PHARNACES.

YES! — I have noted with a jealous eye,
The pow'r of this new fav'rite! Daniel reigns,
And not Darius! Daniel guides the ſprings
Which move this mighty empire! High he ſits,
Supreme in favour both with prince and people!
Where is the ſpirit of our Median lords,
Tamely to crouch and bend the ſupple knee
To this new god! By Mithras, 'tis too much!
Shall great Arbaces' race to Daniel bow!
A foreigner, a captive, and a Jew?
Something muſt be devis'd, and that right ſoon,
To ſhake his credit.

SORANUS.

SORANUS.

Rather hope to ſhake
The mountain pine, whoſe twiſting fibres claſp
The earth, deep rooted! Rather hope to ſhake
The Scythian Taurus from his central baſe!
No — Daniel ſits too abſolute in pow'r,
Too firm in favour, for the keeneſt ſhaft
Of nicely-aiming jealouſy to reach him.

PHARNACES.

Rather he ſits too high to ſit ſecurely.
Yes! he has reach'd that pinnacle of pow'r
Which cloſely touches on depreſſion's verge.
Haſt thou then liv'd in courts? haſt thou grown
grey
Beneath the maſk a ſubtle ſtateſman wears
To hide his ſecret ſoul, and doſt not know
That of all fickle Fortune's tranſient gifts,
Favour is moſt deceitful? 'Tis a beam,
Which darts uncertain brightneſs for a moment!
The faint, precarious, fickly ſhine of pow'r;
Giv'n without merit, by caprice withdrawn.

No

No trifle is ſo ſmall as what obtains,
Save that which loſes favour; 'tis a breath,
Which hangs upon a ſmile! A look, a word,
A frown, the air-built tow'r of fortune ſhakes,
And down the unſubſtantial fabric falls!
Darius, juſt and clement as he is,
If I miſtake not, may be wrought upon
By prudent wiles, by Flatt'ry's pleaſant cup,
Adminiſter'd with caution.

SORANUS.

But the means?
For Daniel's life (a foe muſt grant him that)
Is ſo replete with goodneſs, ſo adorn'd
With every virtue, ſo exactly ſquar'd
By wiſdom's niceſt rules, 'twill be moſt hard
To charge him with the ſhadow of offence.
Pure is his fame as Scythia's mountain ſnows,
When not a breath pollutes them! O Pharnaces,
I've ſcann'd the actions of his daily life
With all th' induſtrious malice of a foe;

And

And nothing meets mine eye but deeds of
honour!
In office pure; for equitable acts
Renown'd: in juſtice and impartial truth,
The Grecian Themis is not more ſevere.

PHARNACES.

By yon bright ſun, thou blazon'ſt forth his
praiſe
As if with rapture thou did'ſt read the page
Where theſe fair deeds are written!

SORANUS.

Thou miſtak'ſt.
I only meant to ſhew what cauſe we have
To hate and fear him. I but meant to paint
His popular virtues and eclipſing merit.
Then for devotion, and religious zeal,
Who ſo renown'd as Daniel? Of his law
Obſervant in th' extreme. Thrice ev'ry day,
With proſtrate rev'rence, he adores his God:
With ſuperſtitious awe his face he turns

Tow'rds

Tow'rds his belov'd Jerufalem, as if
Some local, partial God, might there be found
To hear his fupplication. No affair
Of ftate, no bufinefs fo importunate,
No pleafure fo alluring, no employ
Of fuch high import, to feduce his zeal
From this obfervance due!

PHARNACES.

There, there he falls!
Enough, my friend! His piety deftroys him.
There, at the very footftool of his God,
Where he implores protection, there I'll crufh
him.

SORANUS.

What means Pharnaces?

PHARNACES.

Afk not what I mean.
The new idea floating in my brain
Has yet receiv'd no form. 'Tis yet too foon
To give it body, circumftance, or breath.
The feeds of mighty deeds are lab'ring here,

And ſtruggling for a birth! 'Tis near the hour
The king is wont to ſummon us to council:
Ere that, this big conception of my mind
I'll ſhape to form and being. Thou, meanwhile,
Convene our choſen friends; for I ſhall need
The aid of all your counſels, and the weight
Of grave authority.

SORANUS.

Who ſhall be truſted?

PHARNACES.

With our immediate motive none, except
A choſen band of friends, who moſt repine
At Daniel's exaltation. But the ſcheme
I meditate muſt be diſclos'd to all
Who bear high office; all our Median rulers,
Princes and captains, preſidents and lords;
All muſt aſſemble. 'Tis a common cauſe:
All but the young Araſpes; he inclines
To Daniel and his God. He ſits attent,
With raviſh'd ears, to liſten to his lore:
With rev'rence names Jeruſalem, and reads

The

The volume of the law. No more he bows
To hail the golden Ruler of the Day,
But looks for fome great Prophet, greater far,
So they pretend, than Mithras! — From him, therefore,
Conceal whate'er of injury is devis'd
'Gainft Daniel. Be it too thy care to-day,
To keep him from the council.

SORANUS.

'Tis well thought.
'Tis now about the hour of Daniel's pray'r:
Arafpes too is with him! and to-day
They will not fit in council. Hafte we then!
Defigns of high importance, once conceiv'd,
Shou'd be accomplifh'd. Genius which difcerns,
And courage which achieves, defpife the aid
Of ling'ring circumfpection. The keen fpirit
Seizes the prompt occafion, makes the thought
Start into inftant action, and at once
Plans and performs, refolves and executes!

DANIEL.

PART II.

Scene—DANIEL's *House*.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

ARASPES.

PROCEED, proceed, thrice venerable ſage!
Enlighten my dark mind with this new ray,
This dawning of ſalvation! Tell me more
Of this expected king! this Comforter!
This Promiſe of the nations! this great Hope
Of anxious Iſrael! This unborn Prophet!
This wonderful, this mighty Counſellor!
This everlaſting Lord! This Prince of peace!
This Balm of Gilead, which ſhall heal the
wounds
Of univerſal nature! this MESSIAH!
Redeemer, Saviour, Sufferer, Victim, GOD!

DANIEL

DANIEL.

Enough to animate our faith, we know,
But not enough to foothe the curious pride
Of vain philofophy! Enough to cheer
Our path we fee, the reft is hid in clouds;
And Heav'n's own fhadows reft upon the view!

ARASPES.

Go on, bleft fage! I cou'd for ever hear,
Untir'd, thy admonition! Tell me how
I fhall obtain the favour of that God
I but begin to know, but fain wou'd ferve.

DANIEL.

By deep humility, by faith unfeign'd,
By holy deeds, beft proof of living faith!
O Faith *, thou wonder-working principle,
Eternal fubftance of our prefent hope,
Thou evidence of things invifible!
What cannot man fuftain, fuftain'd by thee!
The time wou'd fail, and the bright ftar of day
Wou'd

* Hebrews, chap. xi.

Wou'd quench his beams in ocean, and reſign
His empire to the ſilver queen of night;
And ſhe again deſcend the ſteep of heav'n,
If I ſhou'd tell what wonders Faith atchiev'd
By Gideon, Barak, and the holy ſeer,
Elkanah's ſon; the pious Gileadite,
Ill-fated Jephthah! He of Zorah too*,
In ſtrength unequall'd; and the ſhepherd-king,
Who vanquiſh'd Gath's fell giant! Need I tell
Of holy Prophets, who by conqu'ring Faith,
Wrought deeds incredible to mortal ſenſe;
Vanquiſh'd contending kingdoms, quell'd the rage
Of furious peſtilence, extinguiſh'd fire!
Victorious Faith! others by thee endur'd
Exile, diſgrace, captivity, and death!
Some, uncomplaining, bore (nor be it deem'd
The meaneſt exerciſe of well-try'd Faith)
The cruel mocking, and the bitter taunt,
Foul obloquy, and undeſerv'd reproach;
Deſpiſing ſhame, that death to human pride!

ARASPES.

* Sampſon.

ARASPES.

How ſhall this faith be ſought?

DANIEL.

By earneſt pray'r
Solicit firſt the wiſdom from above:
Wiſdom, whoſe fruits are purity and peace!
Wiſdom! that bright intelligence, which ſat
Supreme, when with his golden compaſſes *
Th' Eternal plann'd the fabric of the world,
Produc'd his fair idea into light,
And ſaid, that all was good! Wiſdom, bleſt beam!
The brightneſs of the everlaſting light!
The ſpotleſs mirror of the pow'r of God!
The reflex image of th' all-perfect Mind!
A ſtream tranſlucent, flowing from the ſource
Of glory infinite! a cloudleſs light!
Defilement cannot touch, nor ſin pollute
Her unſtrain'd purity! Not Ophir's gold,

Nor

* See Paradiſe Loſt, book vii. line 225. Proverbs, chap. viii. ver. 27.

Nor Ethiopia's gems can match her price!
The ruby of the mine is pale before her!
And, like the oil Elisha's bounty bless'd,
She is a treasure which doth grow by use,
And multiply by spending! She contains,
Within herself the sum of excellence.
If riches are desir'd, wisdom is wealth!
If prudence, where shall keen invention find
Artificer more cunning? If renown,
In her right hand it comes! If piety,
Are not her labours virtues? If the lore
Which sage experience teaches, lo! she scans
Antiquity's dark truths; the past she knows,
Anticipates the future; not by arts
Forbidden, of Chaldean sorcerer,
But from the piercing ken of deep foreknowledge.
From her sure science of the human heart
She weighs effects with causes, ends with means;
Resolving all into the sovereign will.
For earthly blessings moderate be thy pray'r,
And qualify'd; for light, for strength, for grace,
Unbounded thy petition.

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

Now, O prophet!
Explain the ſecret doubts which rack my mind,
And my weak ſenſe confound. Give me ſome
line
To ſound the depths of Providence! O ſay,
Why the ungodly proſper? why their root
Shoots deep, and their thick branches flouriſh fair,
Like the green bay tree? why the righteous man,
Like tender plants to ſhiv'ring winds expos'd,
Is ſtripp'd and torn, in naked virtue bare,
And nipp'd by cruel Sorrow's biting blaſt?
Explain, O Daniel, theſe myſterious ways
To my faint apprehenſion! For as yet
I've much to learn. Fair Truth's immortal ſun
Is ſometimes hid in clouds; not that her light
Is in itſelf defective; but obſcur'd
By my weak prejudice, imperfect Faith,
And all the thouſand cauſes which obſtruct
The growth of goodneſs.

DANIEL.

Follow me, Araſpes.
Within, thou ſhalt peruſe the ſacred page,
The book of life eternal! *that* will ſhew thee
The END of the ungodly; thou wilt own
How ſhort their longeſt period; wilt perceive
How black a night ſucceeds their brighteſt day!
Thy purged eye will ſee God is not ſlack,
As men count ſlackneſs, to fulfil his word.
Weigh well this book; and may the ſpirit of
grace,
Who ſtamp'd the ſeal of truth on the bleſs'd page,
Deſcend into thy ſoul, remove thy doubts,
Clear the perplex'd, and ſolve the intricate,
Till faith be loſt in ſight, and hope in joy!

DANIEL.

PART III.

DARIUS *on his Throne.* — PHARNACES, SORANUS, PRINCES, PRESIDENTS, *and* COURTIERS.

PHARNACES.

HAIL! King Darius, live for ever!

DARIUS.

Welcome!
Welcome, my princes, prefidents, and friends!
Now tell me, has your wifdom aught devis'd
To aid the commonwealth? In our new empire,
Subdued Chaldea, is their aught remains
Your prudence can fuggeft to ferve the ftate,
To benefit the fubject, to redrefs

And raiſe the injur'd, to aſſiſt th' oppreſs'd,
And humble the oppreſſor? If you know
Speak freely, princes! Why am I a king,
Except to poiſe the awful ſcale of juſtice
With even hand; to miniſter to want;
To bleſs the nations with a lib'ral rule,
Vicegerent of th' eternal Oromaſdes?

PHARNACES.

So abſolute thy wiſdom, mighty king,
All counſel were ſuperfluous.

DARIUS.

Hold, Pharnaces!
No adulation; 'tis the death of virtue;
Who flatters is of all mankind the loweſt,
Save he who courts the flattery. Kings are men,
As feeble and as frail as thoſe they rule,
And born, like them, to die. The Lydian monarch,
Unhappy Crœſus, lately ſat aloft,
Almoſt above mortality; now ſee him!

Sunk

Sunk to the vile condition of a ſlave,
He ſwells the train of Cyrus! I, like him,
To mis'ry am obnoxious. See this throne;
This royal throne the great Nebaſſar fill'd;
Yet hence his pride expell'd him! Yonder wall,
The dread terrific writing to the eyes
Of proud Belſhazzar ſhew'd; ſad monuments
Of Heav'n's tremendous vengeance! and ſhall I,
Unwarn'd by ſuch examples, cheriſh pride?
Yet to their dire calamities I owe
The brighteſt gem that gliſtens in my crown,
Sage Daniel. If my ſpeech have aught of worth,
Or if my life with aught of good be grac'd,
To him alone I owe it.

SORANUS (*aſide to Pharnaces*).

Now, Pharnaces,
Will he run o'er, and dwell upon his praiſe,
As if we ne'er had heard it; nay, will ſwell
The nauſeous catalogue with many a virtue
His own fond fancy coins.

PHARNACES.

PHARNACES.

O, great Darius!
Let thine unworthy ſervant's words find grace,
And meet acceptance in his royal ear,
Who ſubjugates the Eaſt! Let not the king
With anger hear my pray'r.

DARIUS.

Pharnaces, ſpeak;
I know thou lov'ſt me; I but meant to chide
Thy flatt'ry, not reprove thee for thy zeal.
Speak boldly, friends, as man ſhou'd ſpeak to man.
Periſh the barb'rous maxims of the Eaſt,
Which baſely wou'd enſlave the free-born mind,
And plunder man of the beſt gift of Heav'n,
His liberty of ſoul.

PHARNACES.

Darius! hear me.
Thy princes, and the captains of thy bands,
Thy preſidents, the nobles who bear rule

O'er

O'er provinces, and I, thine humble creature,
Lefs than the leaft in merit, but in love,
In zeal, and duty, equal with the firft,
We have devis'd a meafure to confirm
Thy infant empire, to eftablifh firmly
Thy pow'r and new dominion, and fecure
Thy growing greatnefs paft the pow'r of change.

DARIUS.

I am prepar'd to hear thee. Speak, Pharnaces.

PHARNACES.

The wretched Babylonians long have groan'd
Beneath the rule of princes, weak or rafh.
The rod of pow'r was fway'd alike amifs,
By feeble Merodach and fierce Belfhazzar.
One let the flacken'd reins too loofely float
Upon the people's neck, and loft his pow'r
By nervelefs relaxation. He, who follow'd,
Held with a tyrant's hand the cruel curb,
And check'd the groaning nation till it bled;
On diff'rent rocks they met one common ruin.
Their edicts were irrefolute, their laws

Were

Were feebly plann'd, their councils ill advis'd;
Now ſo relax'd, and now ſo overſtrain'd,
That the tir'd people, wearied with the weight
They long have borne, will ſoon diſdain control,
Tread on all rule, and ſpurn the hand that
guides 'em.

DARIUS.

But ſay what remedy?

PHARNACES.

That too, O king!
Thy ſervants have provided. Hitherto
They bear the yoke ſubmiſſive. But to fix
Thy pow'r and their obedience, to reduce
All hearts to thy dominion, yet avoid
Theſe deeds of cruelty thy nature ſtarts at,
Thou ſhou'd'ſt begin by ſome imperial act
Of abſolute dominion, yet unſtain'd
By aught of barbarous. For know, O king!
Wholeſome ſeverity, if wiſely fram'd
With ſober diſcipline, procures more reverence
Than all the lenient counſels and weak meaſures
Of frail irreſolution.

DARIUS.

Now proceed
To thy requeſt.

PHARNACES.

Not I, but all requeſt it.
Be thy imperial edict iſſued ſtrait,
And let a firm decree be this day paſs'd,
Irrevocable, as our Median laws
Ordain, that for the ſpace of thirty days
No ſubject in thy realm ſhall aught requeſt
Of God or man, except of thee, O king!

DARIUS.

Wherefore this ſtrange decree?

PHARNACES.

'Twill fix the crown
With laſting ſafety on thy royal brow,
And, by a bloodleſs means, preſerve th' obedience
Of this new empire. Think how much 'twill raiſe
Thy high renown! 'Twill make thy name rever'd,

And

And popular beyond example. What!
To be as Heav'n, difpenfing good and ill
For thirty days! With thine own ears to hear
Thy people's wants, with thine own lib'ral hands
To blefs thy fuppliant fubjects! O, Darius!
Thou'lt feem as bounteous as a giving God!
And reign in ev'ry heart in Babylon
As well as Media! What a glorious ftate,
To be the fovereign arbiter of good!
The firft efficient caufe of happinefs!
To fcatter mercies with a plenteous hand,
And to be bleft thyfelf in bleffing others!

DARIUS.

Is this the gen'ral wifh?

[*Princes and Courtiers kneel.*

CHIEF PRESIDENT.

Of one, of all.
Behold thy princes, prefidents, and lords,
Thy counfellors, and captains! See, O king!

[*prefenting the edict.*

Behold the inftrument our zeal has drawn:

The

The ediƈt is prepar'd. We only wait
The confirmation of thy gracious word,
And thy imperial ſignet.

DARIUS.

Say, Pharnaces,
What penalty awaits the man who dares
Tranſgreſs our mandate?

PHARNACES.

Inſtant death, O king!
This ſtatute ſays, "Shou'd any ſubjeƈt dare
"Petition, for the ſpace of thirty days,
"Of God or man, except of thee, O king!
"He ſhall be thrown into yon dreadful den
"Of hungry lions!"

DARIUS.

Hold! Methinks a deed
Of ſuch importance ſhou'd be wiſely weigh'd.

PHARNACES.

We have revolv'd it, mighty king! with care,

With

With closest scrutiny. On us devolve
Whatever blame occurs!

DARIUS.

I 'm satisfy'd.
Then to your wisdom I commit me, princes.
Behold the royal signet: see, 'tis done.

PHARNACES (*aside*).

There Daniel fell! That signet seal'd his doom.

DARIUS (*after a pause*).

Let me reflect — Sure I have been too rash!
Why such intemp'rate haste? But you are wise;
And wou'd not counsel this severe decree
But for the wisest purpose. Yet, methinks,
I might have weigh'd, and in my mind revolv'd
This statute, ere, the royal signet stamp'd,
It had been past repeal. Sage Daniel too!
My counsellor, my guide, my well-try'd friend,
He shou'd have been consulted; he whose wisdom
I still have found oracular.

PHARNACES.

PHARNACES.

Mighty king!
'Tis as it ſhou'd be. The decree is paſt
Irrévocable, as the ſtedfaſt law
Of Mede and Perſian, which can never change.
Thoſe who obſerve it live, as is moſt meet,
High in thy grace; — who violate it, die.

DANIEL.

PART IV.

Scene—DANIEL's *House*.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

ARASPES.

OH, holy Daniel! prophet, father, friend,
I come, the wretched meſſenger of ill!
Thy foes complot thy death. For what can mean
This new-made law, extorted from the king
Almoſt by force? What can it mean, O Daniel,
But to involve thee in the toils they ſpread
To ſnare thy precious life?

DANIEL.

How! was the king
Conſenting to this edict?

ARASPES.

They ſurpris'd
His eaſy nature; took him when his heart
Was ſoften'd by their blandiſhments. They wore
The maſk of public virtue to deceive him.
Beneath the ſpecious name of general good,
They wrought him to their purpoſes: no time
Allow'd him to delib'rate. One ſhort hour,
Another moment, and his ſoul had gain'd
Her natural tone of virtue.

DANIEL.

That great Pow'r
Who ſuffers evil, only to produce
Some unſeen good, permits that this ſhou'd be:
And, He permitting, I, well pleas'd, reſign.
Retire, my friend: this is my ſecond hour
Of daily pray'r. Anon we'll meet again.
Here, in the open face of that bright ſun
Thy fathers worſhipp'd, will I offer up,
As is my rule, petition to our God,
For thee, for me, for Solyma, for all!

ARASPES.

Oh, ſtay! what mean'ſt thou! ſure thou haſt not heard
The edict of the king? I thought, but now,
Thou knew'ſt its purport. It expreſsly ſays,
That no petition henceforth ſhall be made,
For thirty days, ſave only to the king;
Nor pray'r nor interceſſion ſhall be heard
Of any God or man, but of Darius.

DANIEL.

And think'ſt thou then my rev'rence for the king,
Good as he is, ſhall tempt me to renounce
My ſworn allegiance to the King of kings?
Haſt thou commanded legions? ſtrove in battle,
Defy'd the face of danger, mock'd at death
In all its frightful forms, and trembleſt now?
Come, learn of me; I'll teach thee to be bold,
Tho' ſword I never drew! Fear not, Araſpes,
The feeble vengeance of a mortal man,
Whoſe breath is in his noſtrils; for wherein

Is

Is he to be accounted of? but fear
The awaken'd vengeance of the living Lord;
He who can plunge the everlafting foul
In infinite perdition!

ARASPES.

Then, O Daniel!
If thou perfift to difobey the edict,
Retire and hide thee from the prying eyes
Of bufy malice!

DANIEL.

He who is afham'd
To vindicate the honour of his God,
Of him the living Lord fhall be afham'd
When he fhall judge the tribes!

ARASPES.

Yet, O remember,
Oft have I heard thee fay, the fecret heart
Is fair Devotion's Temple; there the faint,
E'en on that living altar, lights the flame

Of pureſt ſacrifice, which burns unſeen,
Not unaccepted. — I remember too,
When Syrian Naaman *, by Eliſha's hand,
Was cleans'd from foul pollution, and his mind
Enlighten'd by the miracle, confeſs'd
The Almighty God of Jacob; that he deem'd it
No flagrant violation of his faith
To bend at Rimmon's ſhrine; nor did the Seer
Forbid the rite external.

DANIEL.

Know, Araſpes,
Heav'n deigns to ſuit our trials to our ſtrength;
A recent convert, feeble in his faith:
Naaman, perhaps, had ſunk beneath the weight
Of ſo ſevere a duty. Gracious Heav'n
Forbears to bruiſe the reed, or quench the flax
When feeble, and expiring. But ſhall I,
Shall Daniel, ſhall the ſervant of the Lord,
A vet'ran in his cauſe — long train'd to know
And do his will — long exercis'd in woe,

Bred

* 2 Kings, chap. v.

Bred in captivity, and born to ſuffer;
Shall I, from known, from certain duty ſhrink
To ſhun a threaten'd danger? O, Araſpes!
Shall I, advanc'd in age, in zeal decline?
Grow careleſs as I reach my journey's end?
And ſlacken in my pace, the goal in view?
Periſh diſcretion, when it interferes
With duty! Periſh the falſe policy
Of human wit, which would commute our ſafety
With God's eternal honour! Shall His law
Be ſet at nought, that I may live at eaſe?
How wou'd the heathen triumph, ſhou'd I fall
Thro' coward fear! How wou'd God's enemies
Inſultingly blaſpheme!

ARASPES.

Yet think a moment.

DANIEL.

No! ——
Where evil may be *done*, 'tis right to ponder;
Where only *ſuffer'd*, know, the ſhorteſt pauſe
Is much too long. Had great Darius pauſ'd,

This ill had been prevented. But for me,
Araſpes, to deliberate is to ſin.

ARASPES.

Think of thy pow'r, thy favour with Darius:
Think of thy life's importance to the tribes,
Scarce yet return'd in ſafety. Live! O, live!
To ſerve the cauſe of God!

DANIEL.

God will himſelf
Suſtain his righteous cauſe. He knows to raiſe
Fit inſtruments to ſerve him. Know, Araſpes,
He does not need our crimes to help his cauſe,
Nor does his equitable law permit
A ſinful act, from the prepoſt'rous plea
That good may follow it. For me, my friend,
The ſpacious earth holds not a bait to tempt me:
What wou'd it profit me, if I ſhou'd gain
Imperial Ecbatan, th' extended land
Of fruitful Media, nay, the world's wide Empire,
If mine eternal ſoul muſt be the price?
Farewell, my friend! time preſſes. I have ſtol'n

Some

Some moments from my duty, to confirm
And ſtrengthen thy young faith! Let us fulfil
What Heav'n enjoins, — and leave to Heav'n
th' event!

DANIEL.

PART V.

Scene—The Palace.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

PHARNACES.

'Tis done — ſucceſs has crown'd our ſcheme,
Soranus;
And Daniel falls into the deep-laid toils
Our prudence ſpread.

SORANUS.

That he ſhou'd fall ſo ſoon,
Aſtoniſhes e'en me! What! not a day!
What! not a ſingle moment to defer
His raſh devotions? Madly thus to ruſh
On certain peril quite tranſcends belief!
When happen'd it, Pharnaces?

PHARNACES.

PHARNACES.

On the inſtant:
Scarce is the deed accompliſh'd. As he made
His oſtentatious pray'r, e'en in the face
Of the bright God of day, all Babylon
Beheld the inſult offer'd to Darius.
For, as in bold defiance of the law,
His windows were not clos'd. Our choſen bands,
Whom we had plac'd to note him, ſtrait ruſh'd in,
And ſeiz'd him in the warmth of his blind zeal,
Ere half his pray'r was finiſh'd. Young Araſpes,
With all the wild extravagance of grief,
Prays, weeps, and threatens. Daniel ſilent ſtands,
With patient reſignation, and prepares
To follow them.—But ſee, the king approaches!

SORANUS.

How's this? deep ſorrow ſits upon his brow!
And ſtern reſentment fires his angry eye:

Enter

Enter DARIUS.

DARIUS.

O, deep-laid ſtratagem! O, artful wile!
To take me unprepar'd, to wound my heart,
E'en where it feels moſt tenderly, in friendſhip!
To ſtab my fame! to hold me up a mark
To future ages, for the perjur'd prince
Who ſlew the friend he lov'd! O Daniel,
Daniel,
Who now ſhall truſt Darius? Not a ſlave
In my wide empire, from the Indian main
To the cold Caſpian, but is more at eaſe
Than I, his monarch! Yes! I've done a deed
Will blot my honour with eternal ſtain!
Pharnaces! O, thou hoary ſycophant!
Thou wily politician! thou haſt ſnar'd
Thy unſuſpecting maſter!

PHARNACES.

Great Darius,
Let not reſentment blind thy royal eyes.
In what am I to blame? who cou'd ſuſpect

This

This obſtinate reſiſtance to the law?
Who cou'd foreſee that Daniel wou'd perforce
Oppoſe the king's decree?

DARIUS.

Thou, thou foreſaw'ſt it!
Thou knew'ſt his righteous ſoul wou'd ne'er endure
So long an interval of pray'r. But I,
Deluded king! 'twas I ſhou'd have foreſeen
His ſtedfaſt piety. I ſhou'd have thought
Your earneſt warmth had ſome more ſecret ſource,
Something that touch'd you nearer than your love,
Your well-feign'd zeal for me. — I ſhou'd have known
When ſelfiſh Politicians, hackney'd long
In fraud and artifice, affect a glow
Of patriot fervour, or fond loyalty,
Which ſcorns all ſhew of intereſt, that's the moment
To watch their crooked projects. — Well thou know'ſt

How

How dear I held him; how I priz'd his truth!
Did I not choose him from a subject world,
Unbless'd by fortune, and by birth ungrac'd,
A captive and a Jew? Did I not love him?
Was he not rich in independent worth?
And great in native goodness? That undid
him!
There, there he fell! If he had been less great,
He had been safe. Thou cou'd'st not bear his
brightness;
The lustre of his virtues quite obscur'd,
And dimm'd thy fainter merit. Rash old man!
Go, and devise some means to set me free
From this dread load of guilt! Go, set at work
Thy plotting genius to redeem the life
Of venerable Daniel!

PHARNACES.

'Tis too late.
He has offended 'gainst the new decree;
Has dar'd to make petition to his God,
Altho' the dreadful sentence of the act

Full

Full well he knew. And by th' eſtabliſh'd law
Of Media, by that law irrevocable,
Which he has dar'd to violate, he dies!

DARIUS.

Impiety! preſumption! monſtrous law!
Irrevocable? Is there aught on earth
Deſerves that name? Th' eternal laws alone
Of Oromaſdes are unchangeable!
All human projects are ſo faintly fram'd,
So feebly plann'd, ſo liable to change,
So mix'd with error in their very form,
That mutable and mortal are the ſame.
But where is Daniel! Wherefore comes he not
To load me with reproaches? to upbraid me
With all the wrongs my barb'rous haſte has done him!
Where is he?

PHARNACES.

He prepares to meet his fate.
This hour he dies, for ſo the act decrees.

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

Sufpend the bloody fentence. Bring him
hither.
Or rather let me feek him, and implore
His dying pardon, and his parting pray'r.

DANIEL:

PART VI.

Scene—Daniel's Houſe.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

ARASPES.

STILL let me follow thee; ſtill let me hear
The voice of Wiſdom, ere the ſilver cord
By Death's cold hand be looſen'd.

DANIEL.

Now I'm ready!
No grief; no woman's weakneſs, good Araſpes!
Thou ſhould'ſt rejoice my pilgrimage is o'er,
And the bleſt haven of repoſe in view.

ARASPES.

And muſt I loſe thee, Daniel? muſt thou die?

DANIEL.

And what is death, my friend, that I ſhould fear it!
To die! why 'tis to triumph; 'tis to join
The great aſſembly of the good and juſt;
Immortal worthies, heroes, prophets, ſaints!
Oh! 'tis to join the band of holy men,
Made perfect by their ſufferings! 'Tis to meet
My great progenitors! 'Tis to behold
Th' illuſtrious patriarchs; they, with whom the Lord
Deign'd hold familiar converſe! 'Tis to ſee
Bleſs'd Noah and his children, once a world!
'Tis to behold, oh! rapture to conceive!
Thoſe we have known, and lov'd, and loſt, below!
Bold Azariah, and the band of brothers,
Who ſought, in bloom of youth, the ſcorching flames!
Nor ſhall we ſee heroic men alone,
Champions who fought the fight of faith on earth;

But

But heav'nly conquerors, angelic hofts,
Michael and his bright legions, who fubdu'd
The foes of Truth! To join their bleft employ
Of love and praife! to the high melodies
Of choirs celeftial to attune my voice,
Accordant to the golden harps of faints!
To join in bleft Hofannahs to their King!
Whofe face to fee, whofe glory to behold,
Alone were heav'n, tho' faint or feraph none
Shou'd meet our fight, and only God were there!
This is to die! Who wou'd not die for this?
Who wou'd not die, that he might live for ever?

DARIUS, DANIEL, ARASPES.

DARIUS.

Where is he! where is Daniel? Let me fee him!
Let me embrace that venerable form,
Which I have doom'd to glut the greedy maw
Of furious lions!

DANIEL.

King Darius, hail!

DARIUS.

O, injur'd Daniel, can I ſee thee thus!
Thus uncomplaining! can I bear to hear
That when the ruffian miniſters of death
Stopp'd thy unfiniſh'd pray'r, thy pious lips
Had juſt invok'd a bleſſing on Darius,
On him who ſought thy life? Thy murd'rers dropt
Tears of ſtrange pity. Look not on me thus
With mild benignity! Oh! I cou'd bear
The voice of keen Reproach, or the ſtrong flaſh
Of fierce reſentment; but I cannot ſtand
That touching ſilence, nor that patient eye
Of meek Reſpect.

DANIEL.

Thou art my maſter ſtill.

DARIUS.

I am thy murderer! I have ſign'd thy death!

DANIEL.

I know thy bent of ſoul is honourable:

Thou

Thou haſt been gracious ſtill! Were it not ſo,
I wou'd have met th' appointment of high Heav'n
With humble acquieſcence; but to know
Thy will concurr'd not with thy ſervant's fate,
Adds joy to reſignation.

DARIUS.

Here I ſwear
By him who ſits enthron'd in yon bright ſun,
Thy blood ſhall be aton'd! On theſe thy foes,
Thou ſhalt have ample vengeance.

DANIEL.

Hold, O king!
Vengeance is mine, th' eternal Lord has ſaid;
Myſelf will recompenſe, with ev'n hand,
The ſinner for the ſin. The wrath of man
Works not the righteouſneſs of God.

DARIUS.

I had hop'd
We ſhou'd have trod this buſy ſtage together
A little longer, then have ſunk to reſt

In honourable age! Who now ſhall guide
My ſhatter'd bark in ſafety? who ſhall now
Direct me? O, unhappy ſtate of kings!
'Tis well the robe of majeſty is gay,
Or who wou'd put it on? A crown! what is it?
It is to bear the miſeries of a people!
To hear their murmurs, feel their diſcontents,
And ſink beneath a load of ſplendid care!
To have your beſt ſucceſs aſcrib'd to Fortune,
And Fortune's failures all aſcrib'd to you!
It is to ſit upon a joyleſs height,
To every blaſt of changing fate expos'd!
Too high for hope! too great for happineſs!
For friendſhip too much fear'd! To all the joys
Of ſocial freedom, and th' endearing charm
Of lib'ral interchange of ſoul unknown!
Fate meant me an exception to the reſt,
And, tho' a monarch, bleſs'd me with a friend;
And I — have murder'd him!

DANIEL.

My hour approaches.
Hate not my mem'ry, king: protect Araſpes:

Encourage

Encourage Cyrus in the holy work
Of building ruin'd Solyma. Farewell!

DARIUS.

With most religious strictness I'll fulfil
Thy last request. Araspes shall be next
My throne and heart. Farewell! [*They embrace.*
Hear, future kings!
Ye unborn rulers of the nations, hear!
Learn from my crime, from my misfortunes learn,
Never to trust to weak or wicked hands,
That delegated pow'r which Oromasdes
Invests in monarchs for the public good.

DANIEL.

PART VII.

Scene—The Court of the Palace.—The Sun rising.

DARIUS, ARASPES.

DARIUS.

Oh, good Arafpes! what a night of horror!
To me the dawning day brings no return
Of cheerfulnefs or peace! No balmy fleep
Has feal'd thefe eyes, no nourifhment has paft
Thefe loathing lips, fince Daniel's fate was fign'd!
Hear what my fruitlefs penitence refolves —
The thirty days my rafhnefs had decreed
The edict's force fhou'd laft, I will devote
To mourning and repentance, fafting, pray'r,
And all due rites of grief. For thirty days

No

No pleaſant ſound of dulcimer or harp,
Sackbut or flute, or pſaltery, ſhall charm
My ear, now dead to ev'ry note of joy!

ARASPES.

My grief can know no period!

DARIUS.

See that den!
There Daniel met the furious lion's rage!
There were the patient martyr's mangled limbs
Torn piece-meal! Never hide thy tears, Araſpes;
'Tis virtuous ſorrow, unallay'd, like mine,
By guilt and fell remorſe! Let us approach:
Who knows but that dread Pow'r to whom he pray'd
So often and ſo fervently, has heard him!

[*He goes to the mouth of the den.*

O, Daniel, ſervant of the living God!
HE whom thou haſt ſerv'd ſo long, and lov'd ſo well,
From the devouring lion's famiſh'd jaw,
Can he deliver thee?

DANIEL (*from the bottom of the den*).

He can — he has!

DARIUS.

Methought I heard him fpeak!

ARASPES.

O, wond'rous force
Of ftrong imagination! were thy voice
Loud as the trumpet's blaft, it cou'd not wake him
From that eternal fleep!

DANIEL (*in the den*).

Hail! king Darius!
The God I ferve has fhut the lions' mouth,
To vindicate my innocence.

DARIUS.

He fpeaks!
He lives!

ARASPES.

'Tis no illufion: 'tis the found
Of his known voice.

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

Where are my fervants? Hafte,
Fly, fwift as lightning, free him from the den;
Releafe him, bring him hither! Break the feal
Which keeps him from me! See, Arafpes! look!
See the charm'd lions! — Mark their mild demeanor:
Arafpes, mark! — they have no pow'r to hurt him!
See how they hang their heads and fmooth their fiercenefs
At his mild afpect!

ARASPES.

Who that fees this fight,
Who that in after-times fhall hear this told,
Can doubt if Daniel's God be God indeed?

DARIUS.

None, none, Arafpes!

ARASPES.

Ah, he comes, he comes!

Enter

Enter DANIEL, *followed by multitudes.*

DANIEL.

Hail, great Darius!

DARIUS.

Doſt thou live indeed!
And live unhurt?

ARASPES.

O, miracle of joy!

DARIUS.

I ſcarce can truſt my eyes! How didſt thou
'ſcape?

DANIEL.

That bright and glorious Being, who vouchſaf'd
Preſence divine, when the three martyr'd brothers
Eſſay'd the caldron's flame, ſupported me!
E'en in the furious lions' dreadful den,
The priſoner of hope, even there I turn'd
To the ſtrong hold, the bulwark of my ſtrength,
Ready to hear, and mighty to redeem!

DARIUS

DARIUS (*to* ARASPES).

Where is Pharnaces? Take the hoary traitor !
Take too Soranus, and the chief abettors
Of this dire edict : let not one escape.
The punishment their deep-laid hate devis'd
For holy Daniel, on their heads shall fall
With tenfold vengeance. To the lion's den
I doom his vile accusers ! All their wives,
Their children, too, shall share one common fate !
Take care that none escape. — Go, good Araspes.

[*Araspes goes out.*

DANIEL.

Not so, Darius !
O spare the guiltless ; spare the guilty too !
Where sin is not, to punish were unjust ;
And where sin is, O king, there fell remorse
Supplies the place of punishment !

DARIUS.

No more !
My word is past ! Not one request, save this,

Shalt

Shalt thou e'er make in vain. Approach, my
friends:
Arafpes has already fpread the tale,
And fee what crowds advance!

PEOPLE.

Long live Darius!
Long live great Daniel too, the people's friend!

DARIUS.

Draw near, my fubjects. See this holy man!
Death had no pow'r to harm him. Yon fell band
Of famifh'd lions, foften'd at his fight,
Forgot their nature, and grew tame before him.
The mighty God protects his fervants thus!
The righteous thus he refcues from the fnare!
While Fraud's artificer himfelf fhall fall
In the deep gulf his wily arts devife
To fnare the innocent!

A COURTIER.

To the fame den
Arafpes bears Pharnaces and his friends;

Fall'n

Fall'n is their inſolence! With prayers and tears
And all the meanneſs of high-creſted pride,
When adverſe fortune frowns, they beg for life.
Araſpes will not hear. "You heard not me,"
He cries, "when I for Daniel's life implor'd;
"His God protected him! ſee now if yours
"Will liſten to your cries!"

DARIUS.

Now hear,
People and nations, languages and realms,
O'er whom I rule! Peace be within your walls!
That I may baniſh from the minds of men
The raſh decree gone out; hear me reſolve
To counteract its force by one more juſt.
In ev'ry kingdom of my wide-ſtretch'd realm,
From fair Chaldea to th' extremeſt bound
Of northern Media, be my edict ſent,
And this my ſtatute known. My heralds haſte,
And ſpread my royal mandate through the land,
That all my ſubjects bow the ready knee
To Daniel's God — for HE alone is LORD.
Let all adore, and tremble at HIS name,

Who

Who ſits in glory unapproachable
Above the heav'ns — above the heav'n of heav'ns!
HIS pow'r is everlaſting; and HIS throne,
Founded in equity and truth, ſhall laſt
Beyond the bounded reign of time and ſpace,
Thro' wide eternity! With HIS right arm
HE ſaves, and who oppoſes? HE defends,
And who ſhall injure? In the perilous den
HE reſcu'd Daniel from the lions' mouth;
HIS common deeds are wonders; all HIS works
One ever-during chain of miracles!

Enter ARASPES.

ARASPES.

All hail, O king! Darius, live for ever!
May all thy foes be as Pharnaces is!

DARIUS.

Araſpes, ſpeak!

ARASPES.

O, let me ſpare the tale! —
'Tis full of horror! Dreadful was the ſight!
The hungry lions, greedy for their prey,

Devour'd

Devour'd the wretched princes ere they reach'd
The bottom of the den.

DARIUS.

Now, now confefs,
'Twas fome Superior Hand reftrain'd their rage,
And tam'd their furious appetites.

PEOPLE.

'Tis true.
The God of Daniel is a mighty God!
He faves and He deftroys.

ARASPES.

O, friend! O, Daniel!
No wav'ring doubts can ever more difturb
My fettled faith.

DANIEL.

To God be all the glory!

REFLECTIONS

OF

KING HEZEKIAH,

IN HIS SICKNESS.

"Set thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die."

Isaiah, xxxviii.

REFLECTIONS

OF

KING HEZEKIAH,

IN HIS SICKNESS.

WHAT, and no more? — Is this my ſoul, ſaid I,
My whole of being! — Muſt I ſurely die?
Be robb'd at once of health, of ſtrength, of time,
Of youth's fair promiſe, and of pleaſure's prime?
Shall I no more behold the face of morn,
The cheerful day-light, and the ſpring's return?
Muſt I the feſtive bow'r, the banquet leave,
For the dull chambers of the darkſome grave?

Have I conſider'd what it is to die?
In native duſt with kindred worms to lie;

To ſleep in cheerleſs cold neglect! to rot!
My body loath'd, my very name forgot!
Not one of all thoſe paraſites, who bend
The ſupple knee, their monarch to attend!
What, not one friend! No, not an hireling ſlave
Shall hail Great HEZEKIAH in the grave.
Where's he, who falſely claim'd the name of
Great?
Whoſe eye was terror, and whoſe frown was fate?
Who aw'd an hundred nations from the throne?
See where he lies, dumb, friendleſs, and alone!
Which grain of duſt proclaims the noble birth?
Which is the royal particle of earth?
Where are the marks, the princely enſigns where?
Which is the ſlave, and which great David's heir?
Alas! the beggar's aſhes are not known
From his, who lately ſat on Iſrael's throne!

How ſtands my great account? My ſoul, ſurvey
The debt ETERNAL JUSTICE bids thee pay!
Shou'd I frail Memory's records ſtrive to blot,
Will Heav'n's tremendous reck'ning be forgot?

Can I, alas! the awful volume tear?
Or raze one page of the dread regifter?

"*Prepare thy houfe, thy heart in order fet;*
"*Prepare the Judge of Heaven and Earth to meet.*"
So fpake the warning Prophet. — Awful words!
Which fearfully my troubled foul records.
Am I prepar'd? and *can* I meet my doom,
Nor fhudder at the dreaded wrath to come?
Is all in order fet, my houfe, my heart?
Does no befetting fin ftill claim a part!
No cherifh'd error loth to quit its place,
Obftruct within my foul the work of grace?
Did I each day for this great day prepare,
By righteous deeds, by fin-fubduing pray'r?
Did I each night, each day's offence repent,
And each unholy thought and word lament?
Still have thefe ready hands th' afflicted fed,
And minifter'd to Want her daily bread?
The caufe I knew not, did I well explore!
Friend, advocate, and parent of the poor?

Did I, to gratify ſome ſudden guſt
Of thoughtleſs appetite; ſome impious luſt
Of pleaſure or of pow'r, ſuch ſums employ
As wou'd have fluſh'd pale penury with joy?
Did I in groves forbidden altars raiſe,
Or molten gods adore, or idols praiſe?
Did my firm faith to Heav'n ſtill point the way?
Did charity to man my actions ſway?
Did meek-ey'd Patience all my ſteps attend?
Did gen'rous Candour mark me for her friend?
Did I unjuſtly ſeek to build my name
On the pil'd ruins of another's fame?
Did I abhor, as hell, th' inſidious lie,
The low deceit, th' unmanly calumny?
Did my fix'd ſoul the impious wit deteſt?
Did my firm virtue ſcorn th' unhallow'd jeſt;
The ſneer prophane, and the poor ridicule
Of ſhallow Infidelity's dull ſchool?
Did I ſtill live as born one day to die,
And view th' eternal world with conſtant eye?

If

If ſo I liv'd, if ſo I kept thy word,
In mercy view, in mercy hear me, Lord!
For oh! how ſtrict ſoe'er I kept thy law,
From mercy only all my hopes I draw;
My holieſt deeds *indulgence* will require;
The beſt but to *forgiveneſs* will aſpire;
If thou my pureſt ſervices regard,
'Twill be with pardon only, not reward!

How imperfection's ſtamp'd on all below!
How ſin intrudes in all we ſay or do!
How late in all the inſolence of health,
I charm'd th' Aſſyrian * by my boaſt of wealth!
How fondly, with elab'rate pomp diſplay'd
My glitt'ring treaſures! with what triumph laid
My gold and gems before his dazzled eyes,
And found a rich reward in his ſurpriſe?
O, mean of ſoul! can wealth elate the heart,
Which of the man himſelf is not a part!

O, poverty

* This is an anachroniſm. Hezekiah did not ſhew his treaſures to the Aſſyrian till after his recovery from his ſickneſs.

O, poverty of pride ! O, foul difgrace !
Difgufted Reafon, blufhing hides her face.
Mortal, and proud ! ftrange contradicting terms !
Pride for death's victim, for the prey of worms !
Of all the wonders which th' eventful life
Of man prefents ; of all the mental ftrife
Of warring paffions ; all the raging fires
Of furious appetites and mad defires,
Not one fo ftrange appears as this alone,
That man is proud of what is not his own !

How fhort is human life ! the very breath,
Which frames my words, accelerates my death.
Of this fhort life how large a portion's fled !
To what is gone I am already dead ;
As dead to all my years and minutes paft,
As I, to what remains, fhall be at laft.
Can I paft miferies fo far forget,
To view my vanifh'd years with fond regret ?
Can I again my worn-out fancy cheat !
Indulge frefh hope ? folicit new deceit ?

Of

Of all the vanities weak man admires,
Which greatnefs gives, youth hopes, or pride defires,
Of thefe, my foul, which haft thou not enjoy'd?
With each, with all, thy fated pow'rs are cloy'd.
What can I then expect from length of days?
More wealth, more wifdom, pleafure, health, or praife?
More pleafure! hope not that, deluded king!
For when did age increafe of pleafure bring?
Is health, of years prolong'd the common boaft?
And dear-earn'd Fame, is it not cheaply loft?
More wifdom! that indeed were happinefs;
That were a wifh a king might well confefs:
But when did Wifdom covet length of days?
Or feek its blifs in pleafure, wealth, or praife?
No: — Wifdom views with an indifferent eye
All finite joys, all bleffings born to die.
The foul on earth is an immortal gueft,
Compell'd to ftarve at an unreal feaft:
A fpark, which upward tends by nature's force;
A ftream diverted from its parent fource;

A drop,

A drop, diffever'd from the boundlefs fea;
A moment, parted from eternity;
A pilgrim panting for the reft to come;
An exile, anxious for his native home.

Why fhou'd I afk my forfeit life to fave?
Is Heav'n unjuft, which dooms me to the grave?
Was I with hope of endlefs days deceiv'd?
Or of lov'd life am I alone bereav'd?
Let all the great, the rich, the learn'd, the wife,
Let all the fhades of Judah's monarchs rife,
And fay, if genius, learning, empire, wealth,
Youth, beauty, virtue, ftrength, renown, or health,
Has once revers'd th' immutable decree
On Adam pafs'd, of man's mortality?
What — have thefe eyes ne'er feen the felon worm
The damafk cheek devour, the finifh'd form?
On the pale rofe of blafted beauty feed,
And riot on the lip fo lately red?

Where are our fathers? Where th' illuſtrious line
Of holy prophets, and of ſeers divine?
Live they for ever? Do they ſhun the grave?
Or when did Wiſdom its profeſſor ſave?
When did the brave eſcape? When did the breath
Of Eloquence charm the dull ear of Death?
When did the cunning argument avail,
The poliſh'd period, or the varniſh'd tale;
The eye of lightning, or the ſoul of fire,
Which thronging thouſands crowded to admire?
E'en while we praiſe the verſe the poet dies;
And ſilent as his lyre great David lies.
Thou, bleſt Iſaiah! who at God's command,
Now ſpeak'ſt repentance to a guilty land,
Muſt die! as wiſe and good thou hadſt not been,
As Nebat's ſon, who taught the land to ſin!

And ſhall I then be ſpar'd? O monſtrous pride!
Shall I eſcape, when Solomon has died?

If all the worth of all the ſaints were vain —
Peace, peace, my troubled ſoul, nor dare complain!
LORD, I ſubmit. Complete thy gracious will!
For if thou ſlay me, I will truſt Thee ſtill.
O be my will ſo ſwallow'd up in thine,
That I may do THY will in doing *mine*.

THE

SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS:

A PASTORAL DRAMA FOR YOUNG LADIES.

—— To rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to ſhoot,
To pour the freſh inſtruction o'er the mind,
To breathe th' enliv'ning ſpirit, and to fix
The gen'rous purpoſe in the female breaſt.

THOMSON.

TO

Mrs. GWATKIN.

Dear Madam,

As the following Poem turns chiefly on the danger of Delay or Error in the important article of Education, I know not to whom I can, with more propriety, dedicate it than to you, as the ſubject it inculcates has been one of the principal objects of your attention in your own family.

Let not the name of Dedication alarm you; I am not going to offend you by making your Eulogium. Panegyric is only neceſſary to ſuſpicious characters: Virtue will not accept it; Delicacy will not offer it.

The friendſhip with which you have honoured me from my childhood, will, I flatter myſelf, induce you to pardon me for venturing to lay before you this public teſtimony of my eſteem, and to aſſure you how much I am,

Dear Madam,

Your obedient

and obliged humble ſervant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE object of the following Poem, which was written in very early youth, was an earneſt wiſh to furniſh a ſubſtitute for the very improper cuſtom, which then prevailed, of allowing plays, and thoſe not always of the pureſt kind, to be acted by young Ladies in boarding ſchools. And it has afforded a ſerious ſatisfaction to the Author to learn that this little Poem, and the preceding Sacred Dramas, have very frequently been adopted to ſupply the place of thoſe more dangerous amuſements. If it may be ſtill happily inſtrumental in promoting a regard to Religion and Virtue in the minds of young perſons, and afford them an innocent, and perhaps not altogether unuſeful, amuſement in the exerciſe of recitation, the end for which it was originally compoſed, and the Author's utmoſt wiſh in its re-publication, will be fully anſwered.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY A YOUNG LADY.

In theſe grave ſcenes, and unembelliſh'd ſtrains,
Where neither ſly intrigue nor paſſion reigns;
How dare we hope an audience will approve
A Drama void of wit and free from love?
Where no ſoft Juliet ſighs, and weeps, and ſtarts,
No fierce Roxana takes by ſtorm your hearts;
No comic ridicule, no tragic ſwagger,
Not one elopement, not one bowl or dagger!
No huſband wrong'd who truſted and believ'd,
No father cheated, and no friend deceiv'd;
No libertine in glowing ſtrains deſcrib'd,
No lying chambermaid that rake had brib'd:
Nor give we, to reward the rover's life,
The ample portion and the beauteous wife:

Behold, to raiſe the manners of the age,
The frequent moral of the ſcenic page!
And ſhall we then tranſplant theſe noxious ſcenes
To private life? to miſſes in their teens?
The pompous tone, the maſculine attire,
The ſtilts, the buſkin, the dramatic fire,
Corrupt the ſoftneſs of the gentler kind,
And taint the ſweetneſs of the youthful mind.
Ungovern'd paſſions, jealouſy and rage,
But ill become our ſex, ſtill leſs our age;
Whether we learn *too well* what we deſcribe,
Or *fail* the Poet's meaning to imbibe;
In either caſe your blame we juſtly raiſe,
In either loſe, or ought to loſe, your praiſe.
How dull, if tamely flows th' impaſſion'd ſtrain!
If well — how bad to be the thing we feign!
To fix the mimic ſcene upon the heart,
And keep the paſſion when we quit the part!

Such are the perils the dramatic muſe,
In youthful boſoms, threatens to infuſe!

Our

Our timid Author labours to impart
A lefs pernicious leffon to the heart;
What, tho' no charm of melody divine,
Smooth her round period, or adorn her line;
Tho' her unpolifh'd page in vain afpires
To emulate the graces fhe admires;
Tho' deftitute of fkill, her fole pretence
But aims at fimple truth and common fenfe;
Yet fhall her honeft unaffuming page
Tell that its Author, in a modifh age,
Preferr'd plain virtue to the boaft of art,
Nor fix'd one dangerous maxim on the heart.
O if, to crown her efforts, fhe cou'd find,
They rooted but one error from one mind;
If in the bofom of ingenuous youth
They ftamp'd one ufeful thought, one lafting truth,
'Twou'd be a fairer tribute to her name,
Than loud applaufes, or an empty fame.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA,	Four young Ladies of distinction, in Search of Happiness.

URANIA, an ancient Shepherdess.

SYLVIA, ELIZA,	Her Daughters.

FLORELLA, a young Shepherdess.

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS.

Scene—A Grove.

EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA.

CLEORA.

WELCOME, ye humble vales, ye flow'ry ſhades,
Ye chryſtal fountains, and ye ſilent glades!
From the gay mis'ry of the thoughtleſs great,
The walks of folly, the diſeaſe of ſtate;
From ſcenes where daring Guilt triumphant reigns,
Its dark ſuſpicions and its hoard of pains;
Where Pleaſure never comes without alloy,
And Art but thinly paints fallacious joy;
Where Languor loads the day, Exceſs the night,
And dull Satiety ſucceeds Delight;

Where midnight Vices their fell orgies keep,
And guilty Revels ſcare the phantom Sleep;
Where Diſſipation wears the name of Bliſs:
From theſe we fly in ſearch of Happineſs.

EUPHELIA.

Not the tir'd Pilgrim, all his dangers paſt,
When he deſcries the long-ſought ſhrine at laſt,
E'er felt a joy ſo pure as this fair field,
Theſe peaceful ſhades, and ſmiling vallies yield;
For, ſure, theſe oaks, which old as Time appear,
Proclaim Urania's lonely dwelling near.

PASTORELLA.

How the deſcription with the ſcene agrees!
Here lowly thickets, there aſpiring trees;
The hazel copſe excluding noon-day's beam,
The tufted arbor, the pellucid ſtream;
The blooming ſweet-briar, and the hawthorn ſhade,
The ſpringing cowſlips, and the daiſy'd mead,

The wild luxuriance of the full-blown fields,
Which Spring prepares, and laughing Summer
yields!

EUPHELIA.

Here ſimple Nature ſtrikes th' enraptur'd eye
With charms, which wealth and art but ill
ſupply;
The genuine graces, which *without* we find,
Diſplay the beauty of the owner's *mind*.

LAURINDA.

Theſe deep embow'ring ſhades conceal the
cell,
Where ſage Urania and her daughters dwell:
Florella too, if right we've heard the tale,
With them reſides — the lily of the vale.

CLEORA.

But ſoft! what gentle female form appears,
Which ſmiles of more than mortal beauty wears?
Is it the Guardian Genius of the grove?
Or ſome fair angel from the choirs above?

Enter

Enter FLORELLA, *who ſpeaks.*

Whom do I ſee? ye beauteous virgins, ſay,
What chance conducts your ſteps this lonely way?
Do you purſue ſome fav'rite lambkin ſtray'd?
Or do yon alders court you to their ſhade?
Declare, fair ſtrangers! if aright I deem,
No ruſtic nymphs of vulgar rank you ſeem.

CLEORA.

No cooling ſhades allure our eager ſight,
Nor lambkins loſt, our ſearching ſteps invite.

FLORELLA.

Or is it, haply, yonder branching vine,
Whoſe tendrils round our low-roof'd cottage twine;
Whoſe ſpreading height, with purple cluſters crown'd,
Attracts the gaze of ev'ry nymph around?
Have theſe lone regions aught that charms beſide?
Yours are my ſhades, my flow'rs, my fleecy pride.

EUPHELIA.

Florella! our united thanks receive;
Sole proof of gratitude we have to give:
And ſince you deign to aſk, O courteous fair!
The motive of our unremitting care:
Know then, kind maid, our joint reſearches tend
To find that ſovereign good of life, a friend;
From whom the wholeſome counſel we may gain,
How our young hearts may happineſs obtain.
By Fancy's mimic pencil oft pourtray'd,
Still have we woo'd the viſionary maid:
The lovely phantom mocks our eager eyes;
And ſtill we chace, and ſtill we miſs the prize!

CLEORA.

Long have we ſearch'd throughout this bounteous iſle,
With conſtant ardor and with ceaſeleſs toil;
The various ways of various life we've try'd;
But ſtill the bliſs we ſeek has been deny'd.

We've

We've fought in vain thro' ev'ry diff'rent ftate;
The murm'ring poor, the difcontented great.
If Peace, and Joy, in palaces refide,
Or in obfcurer haunts delight to hide;
If Happinefs, with worldly pleafures dwell,
Or fhrowds her graces in the hermit's cell:
If Wit, if Science, teach the road to blifs,
Or torpid dullnefs find the joys *they* mifs;
To learn this truth, we've bid a long adieu
To all the fhadows blinded men purfue.
— We feek Urania; whofe fagacious mind
May lead our fteps this latent good to find:
Her worth we emulate; her virtues fire
Our ardent hearts to *be* what we admire:
For tho' with care fhe fhuns the public eye,
Yet worth like *hers*, unknown can never lie.

LAURINDA.

On fuch a fair and faultlefs model form'd,
By Prudence guided, and by Virtue warm'd,
Perhaps Florella can direct our youth,
And point our footfteps to the paths of Truth.

FLORELLA.

FLORELLA.

Ill would it ſuit my unexperienc'd age
In ſuch important queſtions to engage.
Young as I am, unſkilful to diſcern,
Nor fit to teach, who yet have much to learn.
But would you with maturer years adviſe,
And reap the counſel of the truly wiſe,
The dame, in whom ſuch worth and wiſdom meet,
Dwells in the covert of yon green retreat:
All that the world calls great ſhe once poſſeſs'd,
With wealth, with rank, her proſp'rous youth was bleſs'd.
In adverſe fortune, now, ſerene and gay,
"Who gave," ſhe ſaid, "had right to take "away."
Two lovely daughters bleſs her growing years,
And, by their virtues, well repay her cares.
With them, beneath her ſhelt'ring wing I live,
And ſhare the bounties ſhe has ſtill to give;
For Heav'n, who in its diſpenſations join'd
A narrow fortune to a noble mind,

Has

Has bleſs'd the ſage Urania with a heart
Which Wiſdom's nobleſt treaſures can impart;
In Duty's active round, each day is paſt
As if ſhe thought each day might prove her laſt:
Her labours for devotion beſt prepare,
And meek Devotion ſmooths the brow of Care.

PASTORELLA.

Then lead, Florella, to that humble ſhed
Where Peace reſides: from courts and cities fled!

SONG.

I.

O Happineſs, celeſtial fair,
Our earlieſt hope, our lateſt care,
O hear our fond requeſt!
Vouchſafe, reluctant Nymph, to tell
On what ſweet ſpot thou lov'ſt to dwell,
And make us truly bleſt.

II.

Amidſt the walks of public life,
The toils of wealth, ambition's ſtrife,

We

We long have fought in vain;
The crowded city's noify din,
And all the bufy haunts of men,
Afford but care and pain.

III.

Pleas'd with the foft, the foothing pow'r
Of calm Reflection's filent hour,
Sequefter'd doft thou dwell!
Where care and tumult ne'er intrude,
Doft thou refide with Solitude,
Thy humble vot'ries tell?

IV.

O Happinefs, celeftial fair,
Our earlieft hope, our lateft care!
Let us not fue in vain!
O deign to hear our fond requeft,
Come, take poffeffion of our breaft,
And there for ever reign.

[*They retire.*

Scene—The Grove.

URANIA, SYLVIA, ELIZA.

SYLVIA (*singing*).

I.

Sweet Solitude, thou placid queen
Of modeſt air, and brow ſerene!
'Tis thou inſpir'ſt the Sage's themes;
The poet's viſionary dreams.

II.

Parent of Virtue, nurſe of Thought!
By thee were ſaints and Patriarchs taught;
Wiſdom from thee her treaſures drew,
And in thy lap fair Science grew.

III.

Whate'er exalts, refines, and charms,
Invites to thought, to virtue warms;
Whate'er is perfect, fair, and good,
We owe to thee, ſweet Solitude!

IV. In

IV.

In thefe bleft fhades, O ftill maintain
Thy peaceful, unmolefted reign!
Let no diforder'd thoughts intrude
On thy repofe, fweet Solitude!

V.

With thee the charm of life fhall laft,
Altho' its rofy bloom be paft;
Shall ftill endure when Time fhall fpread
His filver bloffoms o'er my head.

VI.

No more with this vain world perplex'd,
Thou fhalt prepare me for the next;
The fprings of life fhall gently ceafe,
And Angels point the way to peace.

URANIA.

Ye tender objects of maternal love,
Ye deareft joys my widow'd heart can prove,
Come, tafte the glories of the new-born day,
And grateful homage to its author pay!

O! ever may this animating ſight
Convey inſtruction while it ſheds delight!
Does not that ſun, whoſe cheering beams impart
Joy's glad emotions to the pure in heart;
Does not that vivid pow'r teach ev'ry mind
To be as warm, benevolent, and kind;
To burn with unremitted ardor ſtill,
Like him to execute their Maker's will?
Then let us, Pow'r Supreme! thy will adore,
Invoke thy mercies, and proclaim thy pow'r.
Shalt thou theſe benefits in vain beſtow?
Shall we forget the fountain whence they flow?
Teach us thro' theſe to lift our hearts to Thee,
And in the gift the bounteous giver ſee.
To view Thee as thou art, all good and wiſe,
Nor let thy bleſſings hide Thee from our eyes.
From all obſtructions clear our mental ſight;
Pour on our ſouls thy beatific light!
Teach us thy wond'rous goodneſs to revere,
With love to worſhip, and with rev'rence fear!
In the mild works of thy benignant hand,
As in the thunder of thy dread command.

In

In common objects we neglect thy pow'r,
While wonders ſhine in ev'ry plant and flow'r.
— Tell me, my firſt, my laſt, my darling care,
If you this morn have rais'd your hearts in
pray'r?
Say did you riſe from the ſweet bed of reſt,
Your God unprais'd, his holy name unbleſt?

SYLVIA.

Our hearts with gratitude and rev'rence fraught,
By thoſe pure precepts you have ever taught;
By your example more than precept ſtrong,
Of pray'r and praiſe have tun'd their matin ſong.

ELIZA.

With ever new delight, we now attend
The counſels of our fond maternal friend.

Enter FLORELLA, *with* EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA.

FLORELLA (*aſide to the Ladies*).

See how the goodly dame, with pious art,
Makes each event a leſſon to the heart!

Obſerve the duteous liſt'ners how they ſtand!
Improvement and delight go hand in hand.

URANIA.

But where's Florella?

FLORELLA.

Here's the happy ſhe,
Whom Heav'n moſt favour'd when it gave her thee.

URANIA.

But who are theſe, in whoſe attractive mien,
So ſweetly blended, ev'ry grace is ſeen?
Speak, my Florella! ſay the cauſe why here
Theſe beauteous damſels on our plains appear?

FLORELLA.

Invited hither by Urania's fame,
To ſeek her friendſhip, to theſe ſhades they came.
Straying alone at morning's earlieſt dawn,
I met them wand'ring on the diſtant lawn.
Their courteous manners ſoon engag'd my love:
I've brought them here your ſage advice to prove.

URANIA.

URANIA.

Tell me, ye gentle nymphs, the reafon tell,
Which brings fuch guefts to grace my lowly cell?
My pow'r of ferving, tho' indeed but fmall,
Such as it is, you may command it all.

CLEORA.

Your counfel, your advice, is all we afk;
And for Urania that's no irkfome tafk.
'Tis Happinefs we feek: O deign to tell
Where the coy fugitive delights to dwell!

URANIA.

Ah, rather fay where you have fought this gueft,
This lovely inmate of the virtuous breaft?
Declare the various methods you've effay'd
To court and win the bright celeftial maid.
But firft, tho' harfh the tafk, each beauteous fair
Her ruling paffion muft with truth declare.
From evil habits own'd, from faults confefs'd,
Alone we trace the fecrets of the breaft.

EUPHELIA.

Bred in the regal ſplendors of a court,
Where pleaſures, dreſs'd in every ſhape, reſort,
I try'd the pow'r of pomp and coſtly glare,
Nor e'er found room for thought, or time for pray'r:
In diff'rent follies ev'ry hour I ſpent;
I ſhunn'd Reflection, yet I ſought Content.
My hours were ſhar'd betwixt the park and play,
And muſic ſerv'd to waſte the tedious day;
Yet ſofteſt airs no more with joy I heard,
If any ſweeter warbler was preferr'd;
The dance ſucceeded, and, ſucceeding, tir'd,
If ſome more graceful dancer were admir'd.
No ſounds but flatt'ry ever ſooth'd my ear:
Ungentle truths I knew not how to bear.
The anxious day induc'd the ſleepleſs night,
And my vex'd ſpirit never knew delight,
Coy Pleaſure mock'd me with deluſive charms;
Still the thin ſhadow fled my claſping arms:
Or if ſome actual joy I ſeem'd to taſte,
Another's pleaſures laid my bleſſings waſte:

One

One truth I prov'd, that lurking Envy hides
In ev'ry heart where Vanity prefides.
A fairer face would rob my foul of reft,
And fix a fcorpion in my wounded breaft.
Or, if my elegance of form prevail'd,
And haply her inferior graces fail'd;
Yet ftill fome caufe of wretchednefs I found,
Some barbed fhaft my fhatter'd peace to wound.
Perhaps her gay attire exceeded mine—
When fhe was finer, how could I be fine?

SYLVIA.

Pardon my interruption, beauteous maid!
Can truth have prompted what you juft have
faid?
What! can the poor pre-eminence of drefs
Eafe the pain'd heart, or give it happinefs?
Or can you think your robes, tho' rich and fine,
Poffefs intrinfic value more than mine?

URANIA.

So clofe our nature is to vice ally'd,
Our very comforts are the fource of pride;

And drefs, fo much corruption reigns within,
Is both the confequence and caufe of fin.

CLEORA.

Of Happinefs unfound I too complain,
Sought in a diff'rent path, but fought in vain!
I figh'd for fame, I languifh'd for renown,
I would be flatter'd, prais'd, admir'd, and known.
On daring wing my mounting fpirit foar'd,
And Science through her boundlefs fields explor'd:
I fcorn'd the falique laws of pedant fchools,
Which chain our genius down by taftelefs rules:
I long'd to burft thefe female bonds, which held
My fex in awe, by vanity impell'd:
To boaft each various faculty of mind,
Thy graces, Pope! with Johnfon's learning join'd:
Like Swift, with ftrongly pointed ridicule,
To brand the villain, and abafh the fool:
To judge with tafte, with fpirit to compofe,
Now mount in epic, now defcend to profe;

To

To join, like Burke, the Beauteous and Sublime,
Or build, with Milton's art, "the lofty rhyme;"
Thro' Fancy's fields I rang'd; I ſtrove to hit
Melmoth's chaſte ſtyle, and Prior's eaſy wit:
Thy claſſic graces, Maſon, to diſplay,
And court the Muſe of Elegy with Gray:
I rav'd of Shakeſpeare's flame, and Dryden's rage,
And ev'ry charm of Otway's melting page.
I talk'd by rote the jargon of the ſchools,
Of critic laws, and Ariſtotle's rules;
Of paſſion, ſentiment, and ſtyle, and grace,
And unities of action, time, and place.
The daily duties of my life forgot,
To ſtudy fiction, incident, and plot:
Howe'er the conduct of my life might err,
Still my dramatic plans were regular.

URANIA.

Who aims at ev'ry ſcience, ſoon will find
The field how vaſt, how limited the mind!

CLEORA.

Abſtruſer ſtudies ſoon my fancy caught,
The poet in th' aſtonomer forgot:

The

The ſchoolmen's ſyſtems now my mind employ'd,
Their chryſtal Spheres, their Atoms and their
Void.
Newton and Halley all my ſoul inſpir'd,
And numbers leſs than calculations fir'd;
Deſcartes, and Euclid, ſhar'd my varying breaſt,
And plans and problems all my ſoul poſſeſs'd.
Leſs pleas'd to ſing inſpiring Phœbus' ray
Than mark the flaming comet's devious way.
The pale moon dancing on the ſilver ſtream,
And the mild luſtre of her trembling beam,
No more could charm my philoſophic pride,
Which ſought her influence on the flowing tide.
No more ideal beauties fir'd my thought,
Which only facts and demonſtrations ſought.
Let common eyes, I ſaid, with tranſport view
The earth's bright verdure, or the heav'n's ſoft
blue,
Falſe is the pleaſure, the delight is vain,
Colours exiſt but in the vulgar brain.
I now with Locke trod metaphyſic ſoil,
Now chas'd coy Nature thro' the tracts of Boyle;

To

To win the wreath of Fame, by Science twin'd,
More than the love of Science fir'd my mind.
I ſeized on Learning's ſuperficial part,
And title page and index got by heart;
Some learn'd authority I ſtill would bring
To grace my talk, and prove — the plaineſt thing:
This the chief tranſport I from ſcience drew,
That all might know how much Cleora knew.
Not love, but wonder, I aſpir'd to raiſe,
And miſs'd affection, while I graſp'd at praiſe.

PASTORELLA.

To me, no joys could pomp or fame impart:
Far ſofter thoughts poſſeſs'd my virgin heart.
No prudent parent form'd my ductile youth,
Nor led my footſteps in the paths of truth.
Left to myſelf to cultivate my mind,
Pernicious novels their ſoft entrance find:
Their pois'nous influence led my mind aſtray:
I ſigh'd for ſomething, what, I could not ſay.
I fancy'd virtues which were never ſeen,
And dy'd for heroes who have never been;

I ſicken'd

I ſicken'd with diſguſt at ſober ſenſe,
And loath'd the pleaſures worth and truth diſ-
penſe;
I ſcorn'd the manners of the world I ſaw;
My guide was fiction, and romance my law.
Diſtemper'd thoughts my wand'ring fancy fill,
Each wind a zephyr, and each brook a rill;
I found adventures in each common tale,
And talk'd and ſigh'd to ev'ry paſſing gale;
Convers'd with echoes, woods, and ſhades, and
bow'rs,
Caſcades, and grottos, fields, and ſtreams, and
flow'rs.
Retirement, more than crowds, had learn'd to
pleaſe;
For treach'rous Leiſure feeds the ſoft diſeaſe.
There, plaſtic Fancy ever moulds at will
Th' obedient image with a dang'rous ſkill;
The charming fiction, with alluring art,
Awakes the paſſions, and infects the heart.
A fancy'd heroine, an ideal wife;
I loath'd the offices of real life.

These

These all were dull and tame, I long'd to prove
The gen'rous ardours of unequal love;
Some marvel still my wayward heart must
strike,
Or prince, or peasant, each had charms alike:
Whate'er inverted nature, custom, law,
With joy I courted, and with transport saw.
In the dull walk of Virtue's quiet round.
No aliment my fever'd fancy found,
Each duty to perform observant still
But those which God and Nature bade me fill.

ELIZA (*to* URANIA).

O save me from the errors of deceit,
And all the dangers wealth and beauty meet.

PASTORELLA.

Reason perverted, Fancy on her throne,
My soul to all my sex's softness prone;
I neither spoke nor look'd as mortal ought;
To Sense abandon'd and by Folly taught:
A victim to imagination's sway,
Which stole my health, and rest, and peace
away:

Professions,

Professions, void of meaning, I receiv'd,
And still I found them false — and still believ'd:
Imagin'd all who courted me, approv'd;
Who prais'd, esteem'd me; and who flatter'd, lov'd.
Fondly I hop'd, (now vain those hopes appear,)
Each man was faithful, and each maid sincere.
Still Disappointment mock'd the ling'ring day;
Still new-born wishes led my soul astray.

When in the rolling year no joy I find,
I trust the next, the next will sure be kind.
The next, fallacious as the last appears,
And sends me on to still remoter years.
They come, they promise — but forget to give:
I live not, but I still intend to live.

At length, deceiv'd in all my schemes of bliss,
I join'd these three in search of Happiness.

ELIZA.

Is this the world of which we want a sight?
Are these the beings who are call'd polite?

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

If ſo, oh gracious Heav'n! hear Sylvia's
prayer:
Preſerve me ſtill in humble virtue here!
Far from ſuch baneful pleaſures may I live,
And keep, O keep me, from the taint they
give!

LAURINDA.

No love of Fame my torpid boſom warms,
No Fancy ſooths me, and no Pleaſure charms!
Yet ſtill remote from Happineſs I ſtray,
No guiding ſtar illumes my trackleſs way.
My mind, nor wit miſleads, nor paſſion goads,
But the dire ruſt of indolence corrodes;
This eating canker, with malignant ſtealth,
Deſtroys the vital pow'rs of moral health.

Till now, I've ſlept on Life's tumultuous tide,
No principle of action for my guide.
From Ignorance my chief misfortunes flow;
I never wiſh'd to learn, or car'd to know.

With

With ev'ry folly ſlow-pac'd Time beguil'd:
In ſize a woman, but in ſoul a child.
In ſlothful eaſe my moments crept away,
And buſy trifles fill'd the tedious day;
I liv'd extempore, as Fancy fir'd,
As Chance directed, or Caprice inſpir'd:
Too indolent to think, too weak to chooſe,
Too ſoft to blame, too gentle to refuſe;
My character was ſtamp'd from thoſe around;
The figures they, my mind the ſimple ground.
Faſhion, with monſtrous forms, the canvas ſtain'd,
Till nothing of my genuine ſelf remain'd;
My pliant ſoul from Chance receiv'd its bent,
And neither good perform'd, or evil meant.
From right to wrong, from vice to virtue thrown,
No character poſſeſſing of its own.
To ſhun fatigue I made my only law;
Yet ev'ry night my waſted ſpirits ſaw.
No plan e'er mark'd the duties of the day,
Which ſtole in taſteleſs apathy away:
No energy inform'd my languid mind!
No joy the idle e'er muſt hope to find.

Weak indecifion all my actions fway'd ;
The day was loft before the choice was made.

Tho' more to folly than to guilt inclin'd,
A drear vacuity poffefs'd my mind.
Too old with infant fports to be amus'd,
Unfit for converfe, and to books unus'd,
The wife avoided me, they could not hear
My fenfelefs prattle with a patient ear.
I fought retreat, but found, with ftrange furprife,
Retreat is pleafant only to the wife ;
The crowded world by vacant minds is fought,
Becaufe it faves th' expence and pain of thought.

Difgufted, reftlefs, ev'ry plan amifs,
I come with thefe in fearch of Happinefs.

URANIA.

O happy they for whom, in early age,
Enlight'ning knowledge fpreads her letter'd page!
Teaches each headftrong paffion to control,
And pours her lib'ral leffon on the foul!

Ideas grow from books their nat'ral food,
As aliment is chang'd to vital blood.
Tho' faithlefs Fortune ftrip her vot'ry bare,
Tho' Malice haunt him, and tho' Envy tear,
Nor time, nor chance, nor want, can e'er deftroy
This foul-felt folace, and this bofom joy!

CLEORA.

We thus united by one common fate,
Each difcontented with her prefent ftate,
One common fcheme purfue; refolv'd to know
If Happinefs can e'er be found below.

URANIA.

Your candour, beauteous damfels, I approve,
Your foibles pity, and your merits love.
But ere I fay the methods you muft try
To gain the glorious prize for which you figh,
Your fainting ftrength and fpirits muft be cheer'd
With a plain meal, by Temperance prepar'd.

FLORELLA.

No luxury our humble board attends;
But Love and Concord are its ſmiling friends.

SONG.

I.

Hail artleſs Simplicity, beautiful maid,
In the genuine attractions of Nature array'd;
Let the rich and the proud, and the gay and the vain,
Still laugh at the graces that move in thy train.

II.

No charm in thy modeſt allurements they find;
The pleaſures they follow a ſting leave behind.
Can criminal paſſion enrapture the breaſt
Like virtue, with peace and ſerenity bleſt?

III.

O would you Simplicity's precepts attend,
Like us, with delight at her altar you'd bend;

The pleaſures ſhe yields would with joy be em-
brac'd;
You'd practiſe from virtue, and love them from
taſte.

IV.

The linnet enchants us the buſhes among;
Tho' cheap the muſician, yet ſweet is the ſong;
We catch the ſoft warbling in air as it floats,
And with ecſtacy hang on the raviſhing notes.

V.

Our water is drawn from the cleareſt of
ſprings,
And our food, nor diſeaſe nor ſatiety brings;
Our mornings are cheerful, our labours are bleſt,
Our ev'nings are pleaſant, our nights crown'd
with reſt.

VI.

From our culture yon garden its ornament
finds,
And we catch at the hint for improving our
minds;

To

To live to ſome purpoſe we conſtantly try,
And we mark by our actions the days as they
fly.

VII.

Since ſuch are the joys that Simplicity yields,
We may well be content with our woods and our
fields:
How uſeleſs to us then, ye great, were your
wealth,
When without it we purchaſe both pleaſure and
health!

[*They retire into the Cottage.*

Scene—A Rural Entertainment.

FLORELLA, EUPHELIA, CLEORA, LAURINDA, PASTORELLA.

FLORELLA (*ſings*).

I.

WHILE Beauty and Pleaſure are now in their
prime,
And Folly and Faſhion expect our whole time,
Ah! let not thoſe phantoms our wiſhes engage;
Let us live ſo in youth, that we bluſh not in age.

II.

Tho' the vain and the gay may allure us
awhile,
Yet let not their flatt'ry our prudence beguile;
Let us covet thoſe charms that will never decay,
Nor liſten to all that deceivers can ſay.

III. "How

III.

"How the tints of the roſe and the jaſmine's
"perfume!
"The eglantine's fragrance, the lilac's gay
"bloom,
"Tho' fair and tho' fragrant, unheeded may lie,
"For that neither is ſweet when Florella is by."

IV.

I ſigh not for beauty, nor languiſh for wealth,
But grant me, kind Providence, virtue and
health;
Then, richer than kings, and as happy as they,
My days ſhall paſs ſweetly and ſwiftly away.

V.

When age ſhall ſteal on me, and youth is no
more,
And the moraliſt Time ſhakes his glaſs at my
door,
What charm in loſt beauty or wealth ſhould I
find?
My treaſure, my wealth, is a ſweet peace of mind.

VI.

That peace I'll preferve then, as pure as was
giv'n,
And tafte in my bofom an earneft of Heav'n;
Thus Virtue and Wifdom can warm the cold
fcene,
And fixty may flourifh as gay as fixteen.

VII.

And when long I the burthen of life fhall have
borne,
And death with his fickle fhall cut the ripe corn,
Refign'd to my fate, without murmur or figh,
I'll blefs the kind fummons, and lie down and
die.

EUPHELIA.

Thus fweetly pafs the hours of rural eafe!
Here life is blifs, and pleafures truly pleafe!

PASTORELLA.

With joy we view the dangers we have paft,
Affur'd we 've found felicity at laft.

FLORELLA.

Efteem none happy by their outward air;
All have their portion of allotted care.
Tho' Wifdom wears the femblance of content,
When the full heart with agony is rent,
Secludes its anguifh from the public view,
And by fecluding, learns to conquer too:
Denied the fond indulgence to complain,
The aching heart its peace may beft regain.
By love directed, and in mercy meant,
Are trials fuffer'd and afflictions fent;
To ftem impetuous Paffion's furious tide,
To curb the infolence of profp'rous Pride,
To wean from earth, and bid our wifhes foar
To that bleft clime where pain fhall be no more;
Where weary'd Virtue fhall for refuge fly,
And ev'ry tear be wip'd from ev'ry eye.

CLEORA.

Lift'ning to you, my heart can never ceafe
To rev'rence Virtue, and to figh for peace.

FLORELLA,

FLORELLA.

Know, e'en Urania, that accompliſh'd fair,
Whoſe goodneſs makes her Heav'n's peculiar
care,
Tho' born to all that affluence can beſtow,
Has felt the deep reverſe of human woe:
Yet meek in grief, and patient in diſtreſs,
She knew the hand that wounds has pow'r to
bleſs.
Grateful ſhe bows, for what is left her ſtill,
To HIM whoſe love diſpenſes good and ill;
To HIM who, while his bounty thouſands fed,
Had not himſelf a place to lay his head;
To HIM who, that he might our wealth inſure,
Tho' rich himſelf, conſented to be poor.
Taught by his precepts, by his practice taught,
Her will ſubmitted, and reſign'd her thought,
Through faith, ſhe looks beyond this dark
abode,
To ſcenes of glory near the throne of God.

Enter

Enter URANIA, SYLVIA, ELIZA.

URANIA.

Since, gentle Nymphs, my friendſhip to obtain,
You've ſought with eager ſtep this peaceful plain,
My honeſt counſel with attention hear,
Tho' plain, well meant, imperfect, yet ſincere;
What from maturer years alone I've known,
What time has taught me, and experience ſhewn.
No poliſh'd phraſe my artleſs ſpeech will grace,
But unaffected candour fill its place:
My lips ſhall Flatt'ry's ſmooth deceit refuſe;
And truth be all the eloquence I'll uſe.
Know then, that life's chief happineſs and woe,
From good or evil education flow;
And hence our future diſpoſitions riſe;
The vice we practiſe, or the good we prize.
When pliant Nature any form receives,
That precept teaches, or example gives,

The

The yielding mind with virtue ſhould be grac'd,
For firſt impreſſions ſeldom are effac'd.
Then holy habits, then chaſtis'd deſires,
Shou'd regulate diſorder'd Nature's fires.
If Ignorance then, her iron ſway maintain,
If Prejudice preſide, or paſſion reign,
If Vanity preſerve her native ſway,
If ſelfiſh tempers cloud the op'ning day,
If no kind hand impetuous pride reſtrain,
But for the wholeſome curb we give the rein;
The erring principle is rooted faſt,
And fix'd the habit that thro' life may laſt.

PASTORELLA.

With heartfelt penitence we now deplore
Thoſe ſquander'd hours, that time can ne'er reſtore.

URANIA.

Euphelia ſighs for flatt'ry, dreſs, and ſhow:
Too common ſources theſe of female woe!
In Beauty's ſphere pre-eminence to find,
She ſlights the culture of th' immortal Mind:

I would

I would not rail at Beauty's charming pow'r,
I would but have her aim at ſomething more;
The faireſt ſymmetry of form or face,
From intellect receives its higheſt grace;
The brighteſt eyes ne'er dart ſuch piercing fires
As when a ſoul irradiates and inſpires.
Beauty with reaſon needs not quite diſpenſe,
And coral lips may ſure ſpeak common ſenſe;
Beauty makes Virtue lovelier ſtill appear;
Virtue makes Beauty more divinely fair!
Confirms its conqueſt o'er the willing mind,
And thoſe your beauties gain, your virtues bind.
Yet would Ambition's fire your boſom fill,
Its flame repreſs not — be ambitious ſtill;
Let nobler views your beſt attention claim,
The object chang'd, the energy the ſame:
Thoſe very paſſions which our heart invade,
If rightly pointed, bleſſings may be made.
Indulge the true ambition to excel
In that beſt art — the art of living well.

But

But firſt extirpate from your youthful breaſt
That rankling torment which deſtroys your reſt:
All other faults may take a higher aim,
But hopeleſs Envy muſt be ſtill the ſame.
Some other paſſions may be turn'd to good,
But Envy muſt ſubdue, or be ſubdu'd.
This fatal gangrene to our moral life,
Rejects all palliatives, and aſks the knife;
Exciſion ſpar'd, it taints the vital part,
And ſpreads its deadly venom to the heart.

EUPHELIA.

Unhappy thoſe to bliſs who ſeek the way,
In pow'r ſuperior, or in ſplendor gay!
Inform'd by thee, no more vain man ſhall find
The charm of flatt'ry taint Euphelia's mind:
By thee inſtructed, ſtill my views ſhall riſe,
Nor ſtop at any mark beneath the ſkies.

URANIA.

In fair Laurinda's uninſtructed mind,
The want of culture, not of ſenſe, we find;

Whene'er you ſought the good, or ſhunn'd the ill,
'Twas more from temper than from principle:
Your random life to no juſt rules reduc'd,
'Twas chance the virtue or the vice produc'd.
The caſual goodneſs *Impulſe* has to boaſt,
Like morning dews, or tranſient ſhow'rs, is loſt;
While Heav'n-taught virtue pours her conſtant tide,
Like ſtreams by living fountains ſtill ſupply'd.

Be wiſdom ſtill, tho' late, your earneſt care,
Nor waſte the precious hours in vain deſpair:
Aſſociate with the good, attend the ſage,
And meekly liſten to experienc'd age.
What, if acquirements you have fail'd to gain,
Such as the wiſe may want, the bad attain;
Yet ſtill Religion's ſacred treaſures lie
Inviting, open, plain to ev'ry eye;
For ev'ry age, for ev'ry genius fit,
Nor limited to ſcience nor to wit;
Not bound by taſte, to genius not confin'd,
But all may learn the truths for all deſign'd.

Tho' low the talents, and th' acquirements ſmall,
The gift of grace divine is free to all;
She calls, ſolicits, courts you to be bleſt,
And points to manſions of eternal reſt.

And when, advanc'd in years, matur'd in ſenſe,
Think not with farther care you may diſpenſe;
'Tis fatal to the int'reſts of the ſoul
To ſtop the race before we've reach'd the goal;
For nought our higher progreſs can preclude
So much as thinking we're already good.
The human heart ne'er knows a ſtate of reſt:
Bad leads to worſe, and better tends to beſt.
We either gain or loſe, we ſink or riſe,
Nor reſts our ſtruggling Nature till ſhe dies:
Then place the ſtandard of Perfection high;
Purſue and graſp it, e'en beyond the ſky.

LAURINDA.

O that important Time could back return
Thoſe miſ-ſpent hours whoſe loſs I deeply mourn!

Accept,

Accept, juſt Heav'n, my penitence ſincere,
My heartfelt anguiſh, and my fervent pray'r!

URANIA.

I pity Paſtorella's hapleſs fate,
By nature gentle, gen'rous, mild, and great:
One falſe propenſion all her pow'rs confin'd,
And chain'd her finer faculties of mind;
Yet ev'ry virtue might have flouriſh'd there
With early culture and maternal care.

If good we plant not, Vice will fill the place,
And rankeſt weeds the richeſt ſoils deface.
Learn, how ungovern'd thoughts the mind pervert,
And to diſeaſe all nouriſhment convert.
Ah! happy ſhe, whoſe wiſdom learns to find
A healthful fancy, and a well train'd mind!
A ſick man's wildeſt dreams leſs wild are found
Than the day-viſions of a mind unſound.
Diſorder'd phantaſies indulg'd too much,
Like harpies, always taint whate'er they touch.

Fly foothing Solitude! fly vain Defire!
Fly fuch foft verfe as fans the dang'rous fire!
Seek action; 'tis the fcene which virtue loves:
The vig'rous fun not only fhines, but moves.
From fickly thoughts with quick abhorrence
ftart,
And rule the fancy if you'd rule the heart:
By active goodnefs, by laborious fchemes,
Subdue wild vifions, and delufive dreams.
No earthly good a Chriftian's views fhou'd bound,
For ever rifing fhou'd his aims be found.
Leave that fictitious good your fancy feigns
For fcenes where real blifs eternal reigns:
Look to that region of immortal joys,
Where fear difturbs not, nor poffeffion cloys;
Beyond what Fancy forms of rofy bow'rs,
Or blooming chaplets of unfading flow'rs;
Fairer than e'er imagination drew,
Or poet's warmeft vifions ever knew.
Prefs eager onward to thofe blifsful plains
Where life eternal, joy perpetual reigns.

PASTORELLA,

PASTORELLA.

I mourn the errors of my thoughtlefs youth,
And long, with thee, to tread the paths of truth.

URANIA.

Learning is all the bright Cleora's aim;
She feeks the loftieft pinnacle of fame;
On interdicted ground prefumes to ftand,
And grafps at Science with a vent'rous hand:
The privilege of Man fhe dares invade,
And tears the chaplet from his laurel'd head.
Why found her merit on a foreign claim?
Why lofe a fubftance to acquire a name?
Let the proud fex poffefs their vaunted pow'rs;
Be other triumphs, other glories, ours!
The gentler charms which wait on female life,
Which grace the daughter and adorn the wife,
Be thefe our boaft; yet thefe may well admit
Of various knowledge, and of blamelefs wit:
Of fenfe, refulting from a nurtur'd mind,
Of polifh'd converfe, and of tafte refin'd:

Of that quick intuition of the beſt,
Which feels the graceful, and rejects the reſt:
Which finds the right by ſhorter ways than rules:
An art which Nature teaches — not the ſchools.
Thus conq'ring Sevignè the heart obtains,
While Dacier only admiration gains.

Know, fair Aſpirer, could you even hope
To ſpeak like Stonhouſe, or to write like Pope,
To all the wonders of the Poet's lyre,
Join all that taſte can add, or wit inſpire,
With every various pow'r of learning fraught,
The flow of ſtyle and the ſublime of thought;
Yet, if the milder graces of the mind,
Graces peculiar to the ſex deſign'd,
Good-nature, patience, ſweetneſs void of art;
If theſe embelliſh'd not your virgin heart,
You might be dazzling, but not truly bright;
Might glare, but not emit an uſeful light;
A meteor, not a ſtar, you would appear;
For Woman ſhines but in her proper ſphere.

Accompliſh-

Accomplifhments by Heav'n were fure de-
fign'd,
Lefs to adorn than to amend the mind:
Each fhould contribute to this gen'ral end,
And all to virtue, as their centre, tend.
Th' acquirements, which our beft efteem invite,
Shou'd not project, but foften, mix, unite:
In glaring light not ftrongly be difplay'd,
But fweetly loft, and melted into fhade.

CLEORA.

Confus'd with fhame, to thy reproofs I bend,
Thou beft advifer, and thou trueft friend!
From thee I'll learn to judge and act aright,
Humility with Knowledge to unite:
The finifh'd character muft both combine,
The perfect woman muft in either fhine.

URANIA.

Florella fhines adorn'd with every grace,
Her heart all virtue, as all charms her face:
Above the wretched, and below the great,
Kind Heav'n has fix'd her in a middle ftate;

The dæmon Faſhion never warp'd her ſoul,
Her paſſions move at Piety's control;
Her eyes the movements of her heart declare,
For what ſhe dares to be, ſhe dares appear;
Unlectur'd in Diſſimulation's ſchool,
To ſmile by precept, and to bluſh by rule:
Her thoughts ingenuous, ever open lie,
Nor ſhrink from cloſe Inſpection's keeneſt eye;
No dark diſguiſe about her heart is thrown;
'Tis Virtue's int'reſt fully to be known;
Her nat'ral ſweetneſs ev'ry heart obtains;
What Art and Affectation miſs, ſhe gains.
She ſmooths the path of my declining years,
Augments my comforts, and divides my cares.

PASTORELLA.

O ſacred Friendſhip! O exalted ſtate!
The choiceſt bounty of indulgent fate!

URANIA.

Let Woman then her real good diſcern,
And her true int'reſts of Urania learn:

As ſome fair violet, lovelieſt of the glade,
Sheds its mild fragrance on the lonely ſhade,
Withdraws its modeſt head from public ſight,
Nor courts the Sun, nor ſeeks the glare of
light;
Should ſome rude hand profanely dare intrude,
And bear its beauties from its native wood,
Expos'd abroad its languid colours fly,
Its form decays, and all its odours die;
So Woman born to dignify retreat,
Unknown to flouriſh, and unſeen be great,
To give domeſtic life its ſweeteſt charm,
With ſoftneſs poliſh, and with virtue warm,
Fearful of Fame, unwilling to be known,
Should ſeek but Heav'n's applauſes, and her
own;
Hers be the taſk to ſeek the lonely cell
Where modeſt want and ſilent anguiſh dwell;
Raiſe the weak head, ſuſtain the feeble knees,
Cheer the cold heart, and chace the dire diſeaſe.
The ſplendid deeds, which only ſeek a name,
Are paid their juſt reward in preſent fame;

 But

But know, the awful all-difclofing day,
The long arrear of fecret worth fhall pay;
Applauding Saints fhall hear with fond regard,
And He, who witnefs'd here, fhall there reward.

EUPHELIA.

With added grace fhe pleads Religion's caufe,
Who from her life her virtuous leffon draws.

URANIA.

In vain, ye fair, from place to place you roam
For that true peace which muft be found at home:
Nor change of fortune, nor of fcene can give
The blifs you feek, which in the foul muft live.
Then look no more abroad; in your own breaft
Seek the true feat of happinefs and reft.
Nor fmall, my friends! the vigilance I afk;
Watch well yourfelves, this is the Chriftian's tafk.
The cherifh'd fin by each muft be affail'd,
New efforts added, where the paft have fail'd:
The darling error check'd, the will fubdu'd,
The heart by penitence and pray'r renew'd.

Nor-

Nor hope for *perfect* happineſs below;
Celeſtial plants on earth reluctant grow:
He who our frail mortality did bear,
Thô' free from ſin was not exempt from care.

CLEORA.

Let's join to bleſs that Pow'r who brought us here,
Adore his goodneſs, and his will revere;
Aſſur'd, that Peace exiſts but in the mind,
And Piety alone that Peace can find.

URANIA.

In its true light this tranſient life regard:
This is a ſtate of trial, not reward.
Tho' rough the paſſage, peaceful is the port,
The bliſs is perfect, the probation ſhort.
Of human wit beware the fatal pride:
An uſeful follower, but a dang'rous guide:
On holy Faith's aſpiring pinions riſe;
Aſſert your birth-right, and aſſume the ſkies.

Fountain of Being! teach us to devote
To Thee each purpose, action, word, and thought!
Thy grace our hope, thy love our only boast,
Be all distinctions in the Christian lost!
Be this in ev'ry state our wish alone,
Almighty, Wise and Good, Thy will be done!

ODE TO CHARITY.

TO BE PERFORMED BY THE CHARACTERS OF THE PIECE.

I.

O CHARITY, divinely wiſe,
Thou meek-ey'd Daughter of the ſkies!
From the pure fountain of eternal light,
Where fair, immutable, and ever bright,
The Beatific viſion ſhines,
Where Angel with Archangel joins
In choral ſongs to ſing HIS praiſe,
Parent of Life, Ancient of Days,
Who was ere Time exiſted, and ſhall be
Thro' the wide round of vaſt Eternity,
Oh come, thy warm celeſtial beams impart,
Enlarge my feelings, and expand my heart!

II.

Defcend from radiant realms above,
Thou effluence of that boundlefs love
Whence joy and peace in ftreams unfully'd flow,
Oh deign to make thy lov'd abode below!
Tho' fweeter ftrains adorn'd my tongue
Than Saint conceiv'd or Seraph fung,
And tho' my glowing fancy caught
Whatever Art or Nature taught,
Yet if this hard unfeeling heart of mine
Ne'er felt thy force, O Charity divine!
An empty fhadow Science would be found:
My knowledge ignorance, my wit a found!

III.

Tho' my prophetic fpirit knew
To bring futurity to view,
Without thy aid e'en this would nought avail,
For Tongues fhall ceafe, and Prophecies fhall fail.

Come

Come then, thou ſweet immortal gueſt,
Shed thy ſoft influence o'er my breaſt,
Bring with thee Faith, divinely bright,
And Hope, fair harbinger of light,
To clear each miſt with their pervading ray,
To fit my ſoul for Heav'n, and point the way;
There Perfect Happineſs her ſway maintains;
For there the God of Peace for ever reigns.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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